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IN WIJK AAN ZEE

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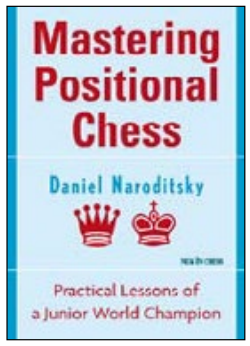

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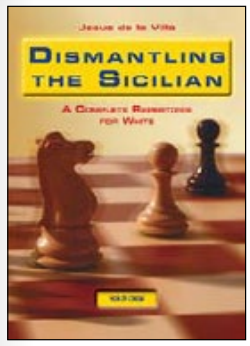

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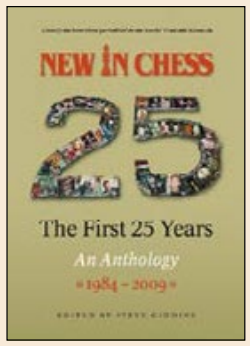

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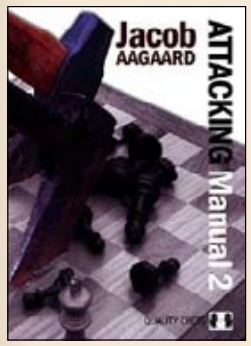

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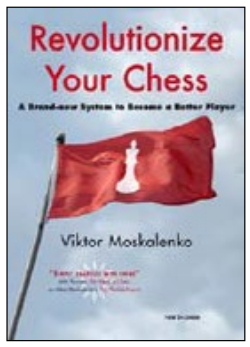

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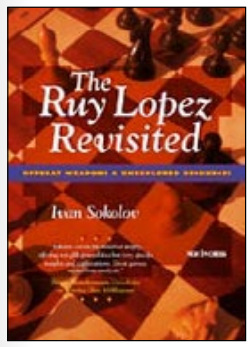

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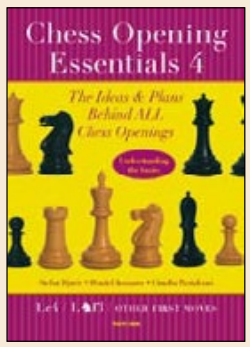

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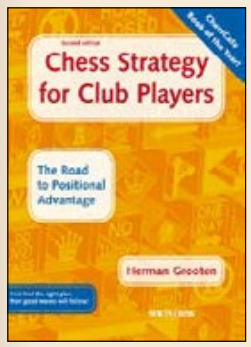

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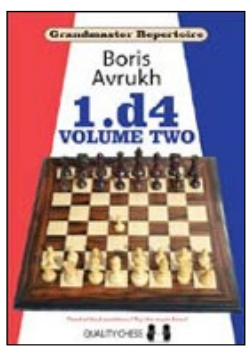

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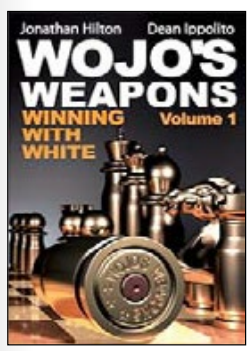

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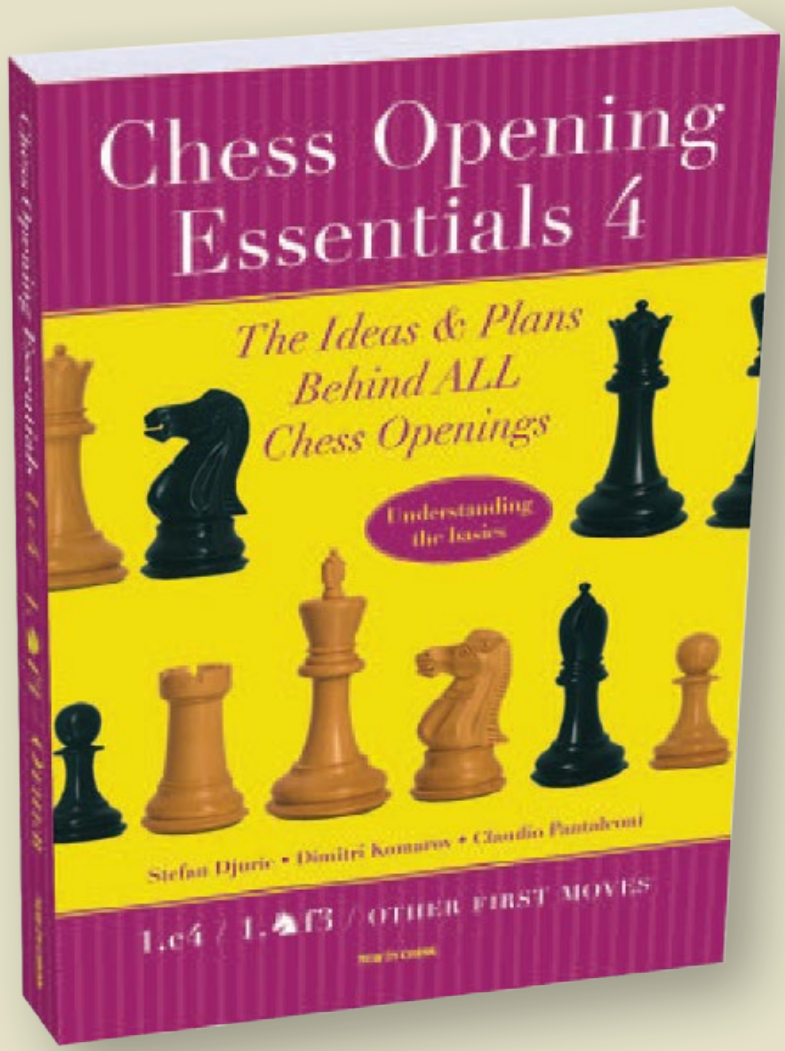
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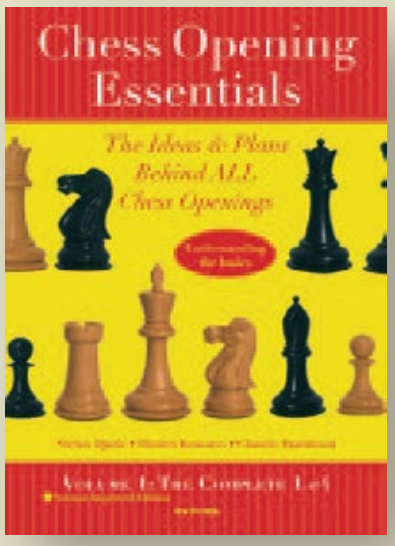

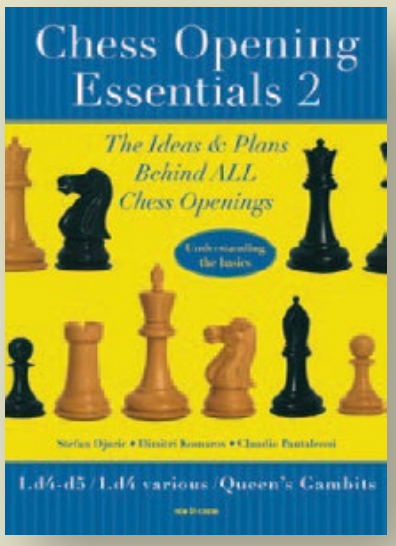

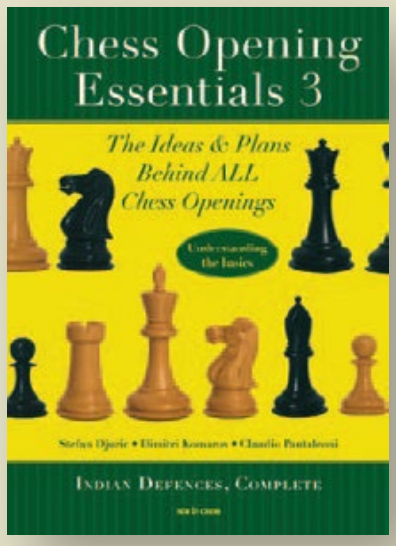

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2010 Issue 2

NEW IN CHESS

PUBLISHER: Allard Hoogland **EDITORS-IN-CHIEF**: Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam, Jan Timman

6 NIC's Café

8 Carlsen First in Corus Photo-Finish
Invigorated by a training camp with Garry Kasparov in Morocco and entering the fray as the new world's number one, Magnus Carlsen was fully determined to go after his first all-out Corus victory and his second Grand Slam title in the new cycle. In one of the most dramatic and exciting races in the 72-year history of the Wijk aan Zee festival, the top-seed indeed finished first, but although no one begrudged him his win it was fair to say that he needed some help from his colleagues. At the traditional pea-soup dinner, the Norwegian did not hide his happiness and gladly expressed his gratitude to everyone that deserved it.

32 Another Great Leap Forward
In hindsight his original ambition was laughably modest. Seeded 12th (from 14), Anish Giri had hoped that he wouldn't lose too many games and avoid last place in the category 16 Corus B-Group. Following an explosive start he understood that he might strive for considerably more. In a fairy-tale scenario Giri continued to dominate the field and claimed the finest victory in his prodigious career. In a highly personal account the 15-year-old Dutch champion tells his 'own story' of one of the most sensational wins in recent chess history.

50 Man vs. Machine
In the decade between 1996 and 2006, man and machine waged a war of chess supremacy in a series of six well-publicized matches. Vasik Rajlich, the human brains behind today's strongest and most popular chess engine Rybka, recounts the history of this defining decade and tell us where 'we' stand now.

57 Diary of a Chess Queen
Jennifer Shahade, woman grandmaster and author of *Chess Bitch, Women in the Intellectual Sport*, shares her views on Alexandra Kosteniuk's new autobiography.

60 A Name to Remember
The ninth Aeroflot Open ended in a sensational win for 18-year-old Le Quang Liem, a name that still sounds exotic but may soon be a household name in top chess. With his back-to-back wins in the biggest Moscow opens, the Vietnamese GM took his rating close to the coveted 2700 mark.

Franny and Zooey and Mickey 66
Ask Stuart Conquest to write a report on the Gibtelecom Festival and you shouldn't be surprised to be taken back to 1872, that fateful year when the Mary Celeste was found adrift in the Atlantic without a trace of the passengers and crew, and Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* was published with the White Kings missing in the first diagram. He also pays tribute to J.D. Salinger and tells you how Adams and Zhukova won.

Friendly Communist Claims Moscow Open 80
The surprise winner of the Moscow Open was Konstantin Chernyshov, a 42-year-old GM who writes a chess column in the newspaper *Pravda* and holds one of the top posts on the Voronezh Oblast party committee.

From Berlinchen to Alaska 88
Hans Ree read *Emanuel Lasker, Denker, Weltenbürger, Schachweltmeister*, a heavy tome of 1079 pages that weighs 3.5 kilogrammes.

The Game of the Year? 92
It's a bit early in the year, but Gashimov-Grischuk is bound to be an undeniable candidate.

Dynamic Nostalgia 96
New In Chess: The First 25 Years took Jonathan Rowson down memory lane.

Najdorf in Wijk aan Zee 100
Jan Timman looks at the renewed popularity of 6.♗g5 against the Najdorf.

Just Checking 106
What does Michael Adams see as his best result ever?

COLOPHON p.7
SUBSCRIPTIONS p.99

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE
Michael Adams, Vishy Anand, Vladimir Barsky, Magnus Carlsen, Fabiano Caruana, Konstantin Chernyshov, Stuart Conquest, Anish Giri, Mark Glukhovsky, Alexander Grischuk, Vasily Ivanchuk, Vladimir Kramnik, Le Quang Liem, Vasik Rajlich, Hans Ree, Jonathan Rowson, Jennifer Shahade, Jan Timman, Natalia Zhukova

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
Özgür Akman, Vladimir Barsky, Torsten Behl, Mark Glukhovsky, Dagobert Kohlmeyer, Zeljka Malobabic, Ilya Odessky

COVER PHOTO
Anish Giri: New In Chess

Sure Enough

Every chess player has been through the ordeal of making blunders and all of us know how hard it is to come up with a decent explanation for your silliness afterwards. So how do you think we felt when we discovered that in New In Chess 2010/1 (p.67) we published a photo of a distinguished gentleman in his late thirties claiming he was Sanan Sjugirov, the 16-year-old Kalmykian debutant in the Russian Super Final? You guessed right, we felt utterly silly.

ILYA ODESSKY

The real Sanan Sjugirov, sure enough.

The sunny side was that we were swamped by reactions from Russian chess players happily pointing out the mistake and showing solidarity with our magazine. Even Vladimir Kramnik called in telling us that he had laughed his head off. The former World Champion's call was particularly appreciated, as he also revealed the identity of the distinguished 'unknown' gentleman whose picture we had published.

MARK GLUKHOVSKY

Indeed, this is world-famous pianist Nikolay Lugansky.

The man intently staring at the chess pieces in front of him was none other than his good friend, world-famous pianist and avid chess player Nikolay Lugansky!

Novelty of the Year

When is a novelty more impressive? When a player manages to steer the game in hitherto unknown directions after only one or two handfuls of moves have been played? Or if he digs up a nugget well into the middlegame of a variation which colleagues have been mining for years? To find out, our colleagues of the Yearbook asked readers to vote for the 2009 Yearbook Novelty of the Year Award (worth €350). Their answer was pretty unambiguous: more than

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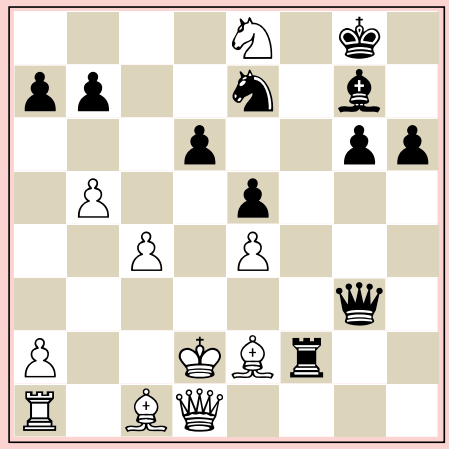
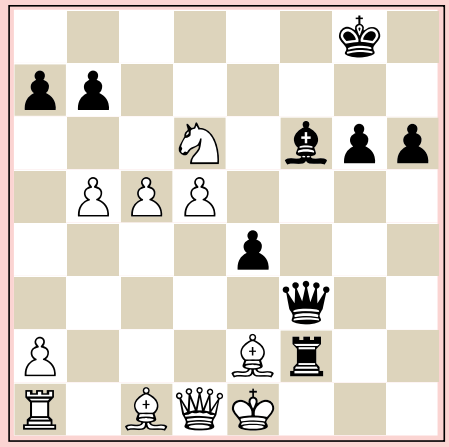
Loek van Wely and Daniel Stellwagen are 24 moves removed from the Yearbook Novelty of the Year.

half of them (52.8% to be exact) chose the novelty that Daniel Stellwagen uncorked on move 24 in his game against Loek van Wely at the NH Tournament in Amsterdam.



Van Wely-Stellwagen
position after 24.♘e8

Here Radjabov continued 24...h5 against Van Wely at the Dresden Olympiad. Stellwagen's investigations had prodded deeper and he played: **24...♕f3!** and reached a winning position: **25.♘xd6 ♗f6 26.c5** The only move to stay in the game was 26.♕e1. **26...♘d5 27.exd5 e4 28.♔e1**



Stellwagen went on to win after **28...♕g2**. However, one might also say that at this point he was a candidate for the Missed Opportunity of the Year, as he failed to see that there was a forced mate: 28...♗c3+ 29.♗d2 ♕g3 30.♗xc3 e3 31.♕d3 ♖f1+ 32.♔xf1 ♕f2 mate.

Smashing the Sicilian

Don't you wax nostalgic when you think of the golden years of theme tournaments? Well, you probably don't, as most of them took place at the start of the 20th century, such as the King's Gambit tournament in Vienna in 1903 or the Gambit tournament in Baden, close to Vienna in 1914, where all gambits were allowed except for

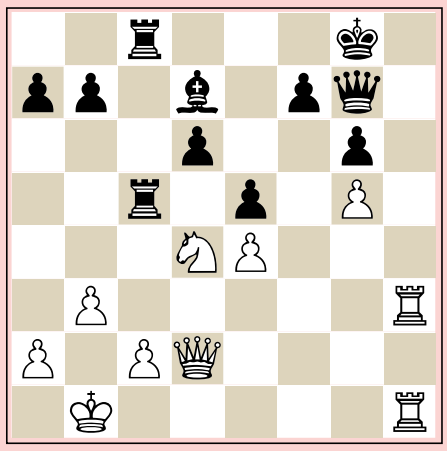
the Queen's Gambit. Probably the last big theme tournament was the Sicilian tournament in Buenos Aires in 1994 organized by Joop van Oosterom for his good friend and Sicilian advocate Lev Polugaevsky. Why is it that theme tournaments seem to have lost their attraction? One possible reason may have come to the fore in the Sicilian theme match that Judit Polgar and Gregory Kaidanov played in Hilton Head, South Carolina. Despite the fact that the match seemed to propagate the Sicilian,

Kaidanov/Polgar-Sicilian: 6-0

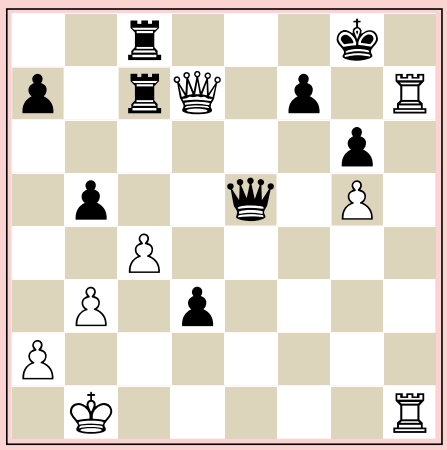
White won all four regular games and also the two ensuing blitz games! Only in the Armageddon game that decided the match did Polgar score a point with black.

SI 18.6 – B78
Judit Polgar
Gregory Kaidanov
Hilton Head Sicilian Theme Match 2010 (2)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♗e3 ♗g7 7.f3 ♘c6 8.♕d2 0-0 9.♗c4 ♗d7 10.0-0-0 ♖c8 11.♗b3 ♘e5 12.♔b1 ♖e8 13.h4 h5 14.g4 hxg4 15.h5 ♘xh5 16.♖dg1 e6 17.♗h6 ♕f6 18.fxg4 ♗xh6 19.♕xh6 ♕g7 20.♕d2 As it goes with Dragons, only this was a new move. Before, 20.♕e3 and 20.♕xg7+ had been seen. **20...♘f6 21.g5 ♘h5 22.♘ce2 ♘c4** Now Black ends up in trouble. Perhaps he should have tried 22...d5. **23.♗xc4 ♖xc4 24.b3 ♖c5 25.♘g3 ♘xg3 26.♖xg3 ♖ec8 27.♖gh3 e5**



28.♖h4! A fine move that essentially decides the game. **28...exd4 29.♕h2 ♔f8 30.♕xd6+ ♔g8 31.♕xd7 d3 32.c4 ♕c3 33.♖4h2 b5 34.e5! ♕xe5 35.♖h7 ♖5c7**



36.♕d6! An elegant finish. After 36...♕c3 37.♕f6! ♕c2+ 38.♔a1 Black is mated.

Fischerman

It's a well-documented fact that Bobby Fischer loved comic books. *Superman*, *Tarzan*, he loved them all and openly said so, although he hated the Soviets for ridiculing him for his predilection. In this light it is safe to say that the American would have welcomed the news (although it's equally safe to say that in his later years there was hardly anything that triggered his approval or consent) that Tobey Maguire has accepted to play the role of Bobby Fischer in a movie that for the moment has the working title 'Pawn Sacrifice'. According to the website firstshowing.net, this move will take Maguire, who rose to stardom with his brilliant renderings of Spiderman in *Spiderman I*, *II* and *III*, 'from comic book geeks to a whole new level of nerd'. For the moment information about the project is scarce, but the script will be written by Steven Knight and the story is based

Tobey Maguire, 'from comic book geek to a whole new level of nerd'.

on the acclaimed *Bobby Fischer Goes to War* about the 1972 World Championship match in Reykjavik by David Edmonds and John Eidinow.

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PHONE: 00-31-(0)72-51 27 137
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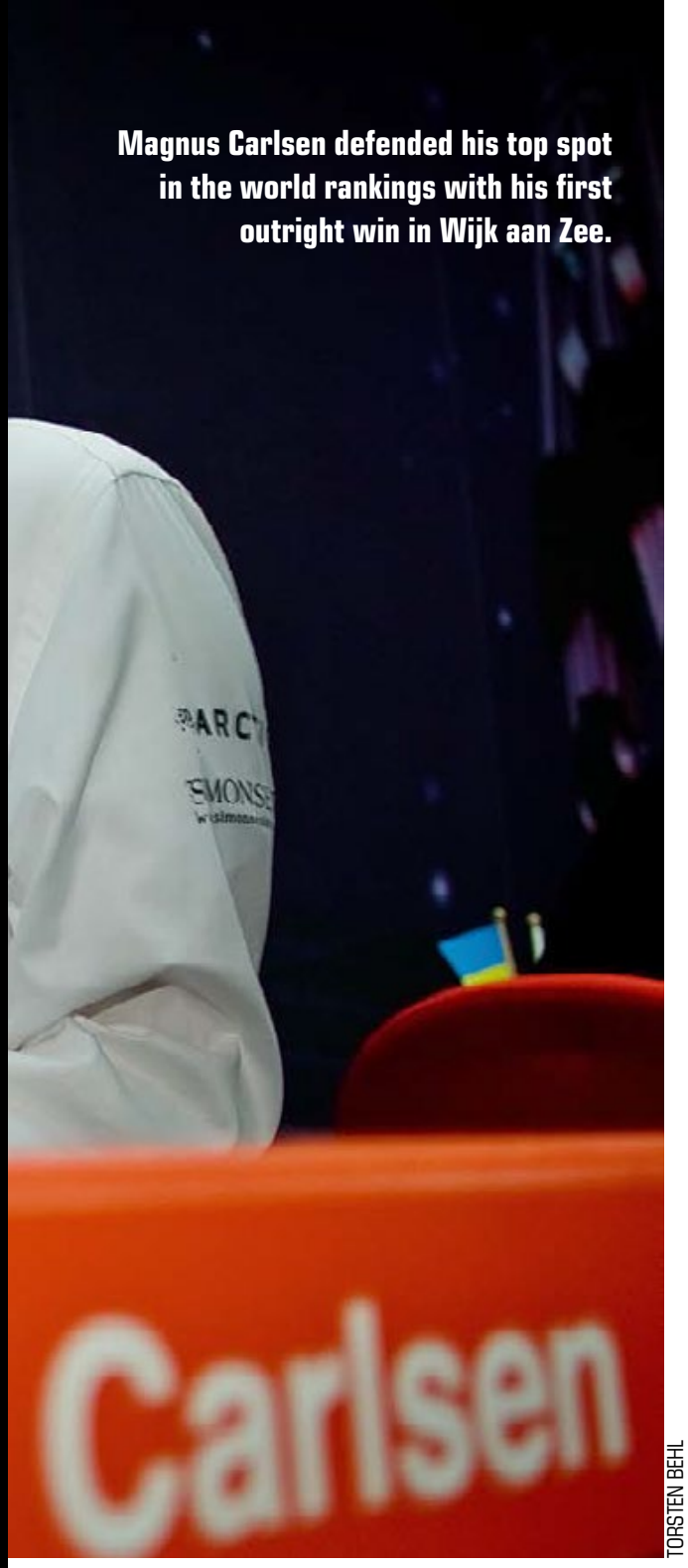
Carlsen first in Corus photo-finish

Invigorated by a training camp with Garry Kasparov in Morocco and entering the fray as the new world's number one, Magnus Carlsen was fully determined to go after his first all-out Corus victory and his second Grand Slam title in the new cycle. In one of the most dramatic and exciting races in the 72-year history of the Wijk aan Zee festival, the top-seed indeed finished first, but although no one begrudged him his win, it was fair to say that he needed some help from his colleagues. At the traditional pea-soup dinner, the Norwegian did not hide his happiness and gladly expressed his gratitude to everyone that deserved it. To his colleagues for their cooperation and to the organizers for the extraordinary weather conditions that had made him feel at home even more than usual. This year, instead of being swept by rain and wind, the village of Wijk aan Zee and the adjoining beach were all covered with snow and ice.



Magnus Carlsen defended his top spot in the world rankings with his first outright win in Wijk aan Zee.

TORSTEN BEHL

Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam

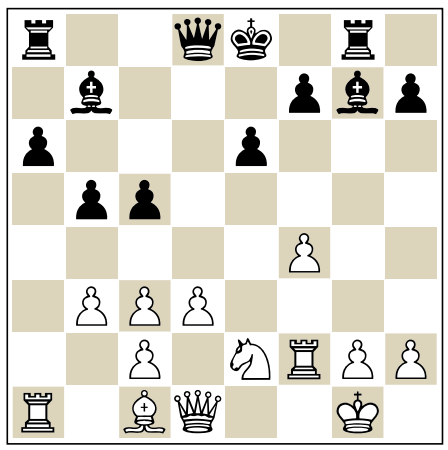
Last year we witnessed a teenage revolution in Wijk aan Zee. In the absence of 'old hands' Anand, Kramnik and Topalov, 19-year-old Sergey Karjakin won the Corus top group, while 16-year-old Fabiano Caruana topped the B-group and 15-year-old Wesley So took the spoils in the C-group. In the remainder of 2009 this trend of teenagers conspicuously coming to the fore continued, the undisputed leader obviously being Magnus Carlsen, who at 19 wrote history by becoming the youngest ever world's number one thanks to splendid wins in Nanjing and London. Yet the race is far from run, and the generation that has been dominating chess for the past two decades is still very much around. Alexey Shirov won the 2009 MTel Masters, Vladimir Kramnik was the strongest both in Dortmund and in the Tal Memorial, Boris Gelfand claimed the World Cup and shortly Vishy Anand and Veselin Topalov will play a match for the World Championship.

For the chess world this battle of the generations is a boon that adds suspense to the top events and creates new rivalries such as the one between Carlsen and Kramnik, which has already produced several epic battles. Typical of the underlying tension that comes with the new situation was the effect that a relatively innocent remark by Hikaru Nakamura had in Wijk aan Zee. Showing his win against Shirov from Round 7 to the press, the American champion called his opponent's decision to play the Sicilian 'a mistake'. Nakamura, who at that point was trailing the leading Spaniard by 1½ points, felt that Shirov would have done wiser to play a solid 1...e5 opening. After all, he, as White was in a must-win situation, whereas Shirov would only strengthen his lead if he drew the game. Nakamura's words were not taken for the objective remark he had intended them to be. On chess forums they were seen as an insolent and uncalled for snide at the great experience and fighting spirit of Shirov. Funnily enough, it was Shirov's old rival Kramnik who retaliated for him when the Russian defeated Nakamura the next day. Making sure that no one missed his comment he smilingly said that the American's choice to play the Dutch Defence was not a wise one, as he should have known that he had excellent results against that opening. And one round later Kramnik rubbed in some more salt after beating Magnus Carlsen. Relishing the words as he spoke them, he commented that his opponent's choice to play the Catalan had not been very wise, as he had excellent results in that opening *both as Black and White*.

As said, for the fans these witty gibes and expressions of relatively innocent acrimony only liven up the proceedings, and it is tempting to look at the 2010 Corus tournament as a conflict of generations. In that case the old guard struck first. Alexey Shirov started off by winning his first five games and for three of these wins he received the €500 daily prize for the best game. The win he liked best was the one against Sergey Tiviakov in Round 3.

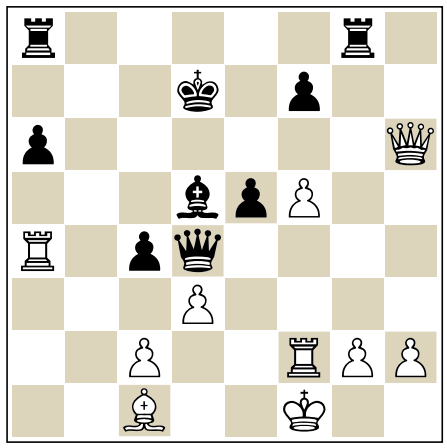
SI 44.6 – B23
Sergey Tiviakov
Alexey Shirov
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (3)

1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 No 2.c3 this time, but another Tiviakov specialty. **2...♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘d4 4.♗c4 e6 5.♘ge2 ♘f6 6.0-0 a6 7.d3 b5 8.♗b3 ♘xb3 9.axb3 ♗b7 10.f4** Deviating from a game Tiviakov-Kotronias, in which Black got excellent play (and went on to win) after 10.♘g3 d6 11.f4 h5. **10...d5 11.e5 d4 12.exf6 dxc3 13.fxg7 ♗xg7 14.bxc3 ♖g8 15.♖f2**



15...♗xc3 Shirov had originally planned 15...♕d5, but seeing

that Black would be worse after 16.♕f1 ♗f6 17.f5 ♗h4 18.♘g3 ♗xg3 19.hxg3 ♖xg3 20.♗f4, he decided to regain his pawn right away. **16.♘xc3 ♕d4 17.♔f1 ♕xc3 18.♖a2** At this point Shirov had the feeling that they were still in Tiviakov's preparation and that Black still had to fight for equality. **18...♕d4 19.♕h5 c4** Setting a trap. **20.bxc4 bxc4 21.♖a4 ♗d5 22.f5 e5 23.♕xh7** And Tiviakov falls for it. According to Shirov, White should have played 23.♕h6, when Black answers 23...♔d7. **23...♔d7 24.♕h6**

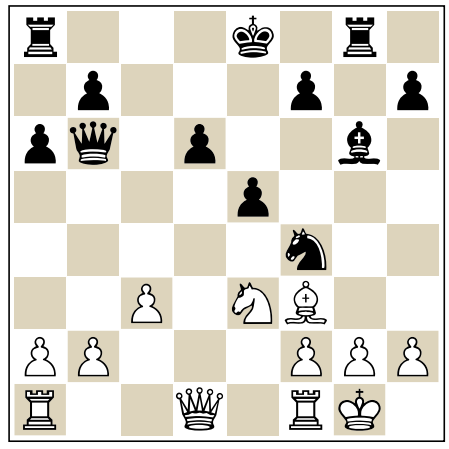


24...♗xg2+! This was Black's intention. **25.♔e1** As Shirov showed, White cannot play 25.♖xg2, because of 25...♖xg2 26.♔xg2 ♖g8+ 27.♔f3 e4+ 28.dxe4 ♕d1+ 29.♔f2 ♕g1+ 30.♔f3 ♕f1+ 31.♔e3 ♕xc1+, and Black can resign. **25...♗d5 26.♗a3 ♖g1+ 27.♔e2 ♕g4+ 28.♔e3 ♖e1+ 29.♔d2 ♕d1+ 30.♔c3 ♕a1+ 31.♔b4 ♖b1+** White resigned.

Despite his explosive start, Shirov didn't get carried away. He pointed out that at various points he had been lucky, and he also knew that he had yet to meet his biggest rivals. Three of his wins were against the three Dutch GMs, who not only happened to be the three bottom seeds, but who would also finish in these designated spots. Shirov was certainly not dreaming of the record of Viktor Kortchnoi, who in 1968 won his first eight games in Wijk aan Zee, and calmly accepted the draw against Short in Round 6. His lead of one and a half points dwindled to a mere half point when he lost to Nakamura in Round 7.

SI 36.1 – B33
Hikaru Nakamura
Alexey Shirov
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (7)

1.e4 c5 As a draw would not have been bad for Shirov, Nakamura believed that 1...e5 would have been a better decision. **2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5 d6 7.♗g5 a6 8.♗xf6 gxf6 9.♘a3 f5** Nakamura was happy to see this move, as he believed that having left the well-trodden Sveshnikov paths, both players were on their own now. **10.♘c4 ♘d4 11.exf5 ♗xf5 12.♘e3 ♗g6** More Sveshnikov-like would have been 12...♗e6. **13.♘cd5 ♗h6** The alternatives were 13...♗g7 or 13...f5. **14.c3 ♘e6 15.♗d3** Now Shirov thought for a long time, understanding that Black has to tread carefully. **15...♗xe3 16.♘xe3 ♕b6 17.0-0 ♘f4 18.♗e2 ♖g8 19.♗f3**

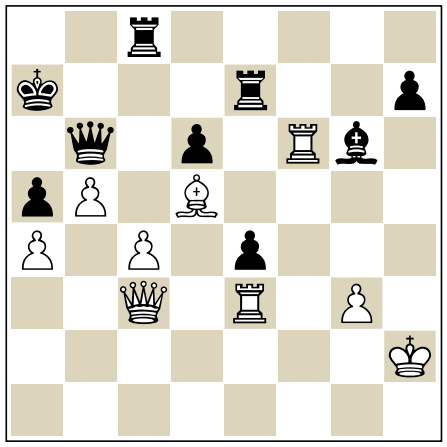


19...♘h3+ This turns out to be a mistake. According to Nakamura, Black should have tried 19...0-0-0, as White cannot play 20.♘d5 ♘xd5 21.♕xd5 now in view of 21...♕xb2, and White is just a pawn down. **20.♔h1 ♘xf2+ 21.♖xf2 ♕xe3 22.♗xb7 ♖b8 23.♖e2 ♕b6 24.♗d5** Black's king is stuck in the middle, which complicates the coordination of his pieces. **24...♖g7 25.♕d2 f5 26.♖f1 ♔d7 27.b4 f4 28.a4** Afterwards, Naka-

NEW IN CHESS

Despite his explosive start, Alexey Shirov didn't get carried away.

mura opined that 28.a3, followed by c4-c5 was better. **28...a5 29.b5 ♖d8 30.g3** White has to play actively, to prevent Black from taking his king to safety on b8, followed by transferring his rook to c5. **30...fxg3 31.hxg3 ♔c8 32.c4 ♔b8 33.♖f6** Introducing the threat c5!. **33...♖e7 34.♔h2 e4 35.♕c3 ♖c8 36.♖e3 ♔a7?**



This quickly loses, but Black's position was difficult anyway. **37.♗c6 ♖d8 38.c5 dxc5 39.♗xe4** The black position collapses. **39...♖d6 40.♖xd6 ♕xd6 41.♕xa5+** Black resigned.

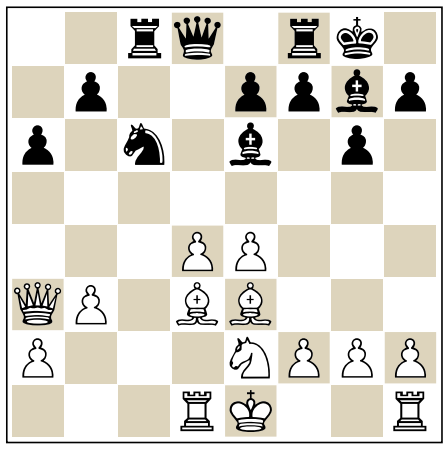
Nakamura now shared second place with Magnus Carlsen. The American had been playing strong and energetic chess and he wasn't the only one who believed that in this shape he might beat anyone. Carlsen closed in on Shirov thanks to a slightly bizarre win against Ivanchuk. The Ukrainian arrived at the board sporting a gaudy tie and no doubt anxious to show his best against the leader in the world rankings. His plans were upset early on in the opening when in the position he had been aiming at he discovered that his intended move had a serious downside. As he would otherwise have been playing a healthy pawn down, he nevertheless went for his original plan. Afterwards he praised the precision with which Carlsen had exploited his mistake and admitted that his tie had not been such a good idea either.

TORSTEN BEHL

After his loss to Magnus Carlsen, Vasily Ivanchuk regretted both his opening strategy and the gaudy tie he had chosen for the occasion.

SL 11.12 – D10
Magnus Carlsen
Vasily Ivanchuk
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (7)

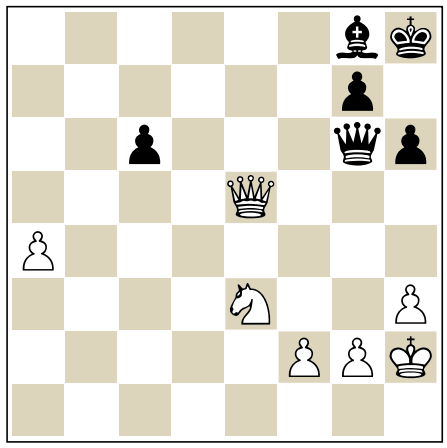
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 a6 5.♕c2 g6 6.♗d3 ♗e6 7.b3 ♗g7 8.♘ge2 c5 9.cxd5 ♘xd5 10.♘xd5 ♗xd5 11.e4 ♗e6 12.♕xc5 ♘c6 13.♗e3 ♖c8 14.♕a3 0-0 15.♖d1



The position Black had been aiming for. Only now did Ivanchuk begin to doubt, but he couldn't stop himself from making the move he had originally planned. **15...♘xd4? 16.♗xd4 ♗xd4 17.♗b1 ♗c5 18.b4** Now Black has to choose between giving up a piece or going for the following desperado action. **18...♕xd1+ 19.♔xd1 ♗xf2 20.♘f4 ♗c4 21.♗d3 ♖fd8 22.♔e2** Black doesn't get a chance to become really dangerous. **22...♗xd3+ 23.♔xf2 ♖c2+ 24.♔f3 ♗c4 25.♖c1 ♖xa2 26.♕c3 b5 27.♖a1 ♖dd2 28.♖xa2 ♖xa2 29.h4 h5 30.g4 hxg4+ 31.♔xg4 f6 32.e5 ♔f7 33.exf6 exf6 34.♕e3 ♖c2 35.♕a7+** Black resigned.

The longest game of Round 7 was also the most dramatic one. As part of his preparation for his return in the Corus top group (let's not forget that he won the tournament back in 1986 and '87), Nigel Short (44) had read Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. A purposeful choice, as he explained, as this novella is about 'an old man who hopes to catch one last big fish'. That big fish, and it need not necessarily have been his last, Short could have caught in that fateful Round 7, when with excellent play he put Kramnik's Petroff under pressure and reached a completely winning position.

This was the position immediately after the first time-control:



Short-Kramnik
position after 43.♕e5

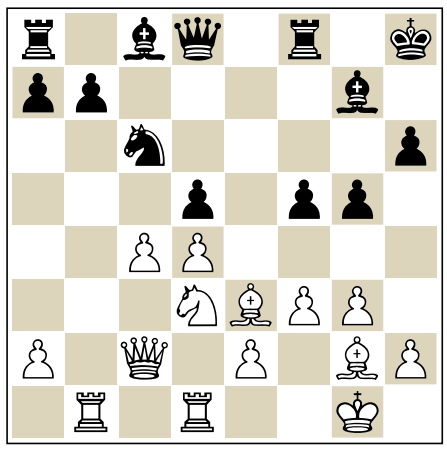
White is a pawn up and it's a big one, as it is hard to see how Black can stop the white a-pawn from touching down on a8, particularly as the white queen gives him added worries (with the knight coming to f5 and threatening to take on h6 if the black queen leaves). The game was played on a Saturday, and those leaving early to go for dinner could not believe that the game had ended in a draw after 63 moves. Still, that is what happened and this is how:
43...♕f7 44.♘f5 ♕a7 45.a5 c5 46.f4 ♗a2 47.a6 ♗c4 48.♘xh6 ♕xa6 49.♘f5 ♕f6 50.♕xc5 ♗e6 51.g4 ♗xf5 52.♕xf5 ♕b2+ 53.♔g3 ♕c3+ 54.♔h4 ♕e1+ 55.♔h5 ♕e8+ 56.♕g6 ♕e3 57.♔g5 ♕e7+ 58.♔h5 ♕e3 59.♕f7 ♕xh3+ 60.♔g5 ♕h6+ 61.♔f5 g6+ 62.♔e5 ♕g5+ 63. fxg5 Stalemate.

Fortunately, this setback didn't rob Short of his humour. Wistfully he elaborated on his Hemingway anecdote, saying: 'Of course I should have realized that in the end, in his attempt to catch this big fish, the old man is done in.'

For Kramnik this lucky break had the effect such miraculous escapes often have. The next day he overturned Nakamura's Dutch Defence and edged in on Shirov, who maintained a half-point lead after drawing with Carlsen in a repeat of the Sveshnikov discussion they had in last year's MTel Masters.

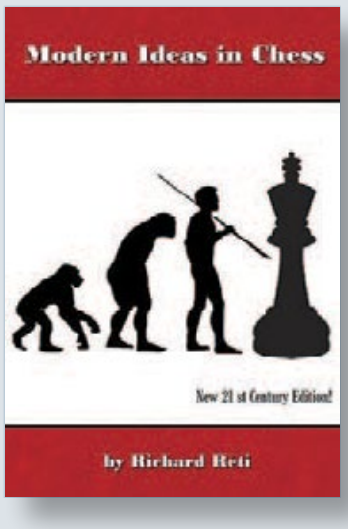
HD 6.3 – A88
Vladimir Kramnik
Hikaru Nakamura
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (8)

1.d4 f5 The Dutch Defence, actually the opening Kramnik had expected Nakamura to play. **2.g3 ♘f6 3.♗g2 g6 4.c4 ♗g7 5.♘c3 0-0 6.♘f3 d6 7.0-0 c6 8.♖b1 ♘e4 9.♕c2** He had found this move around 3 a.m. when preparing the previous night. **9...♘xc3 10.bxc3 e5 11.♖d1!** That was the idea. **11...e4 12.♘g5 h6 13.♘h3 g5 14.f3 d5** Pretty much forced, as it would be way too dangerous to let White open up the position after 14...exf3 15.exf3. **15.♘f2 ♔h8 16. cxd5 cxd5 17.c4** White has a most pleasant advantage and Black tries his best chance: **17...e3!? 18.♘d3 ♘c6 19.♗xe3**



19...♘xd4? Black should have tried 19...♕e8, even though the players concluded in their post-mortem that White would be clearly better after 20.♕c1 dxc4 21.♘e5 ♘xe5 22.dxe5 ♕xe5 23. f4. **20.♗xd4 ♗xd4+ 21.♔h1 f4 22.♖b5!** A precise move that Kramnik was very pleased with. **22...♕f6 23.♖xd5 ♗e6?** This loses quickly. **24.♘xf4 gxf4 25.**

Modern Ideas in Chess, by Richard Réti



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NEW IN CHESS

Vishy Anand: 'I simply needed some time to get going and sometimes you get stuck in ruts. I kept getting the opposite of what I intended.'

♖5xd4 fxg3 26.hxg3 Black doesn't have any compensation for the two pawns. The rest isn't too difficult. **26...♖g8 27.♖f4 ♕g5 28.♖h4 ♖g6 29.♕c3+ ♔h7 30.f4 ♕xg3 31.♕xg3 ♖xg3 32.♗xb7 ♖b8 33.♗e4+ ♔g7 34.♔h2 ♖e3 35.♖g1+ ♔f7 36.♗g6+ ♔e7 37.♗d3 ♖b2 38.♖g2 ♖xa2 39.♖xh6 ♗f7 40.♖h7 ♔f6 41.c5 ♖a4 42.c6 ♖xf4 43.c7 ♖e8 44.♖xf7+** Black resigned.

Carlsen arrived in Wijk aan Zee straight from a training camp with Garry Kasparov in Morocco. Kasparov believed that before he was going to seek the wind-swept shores of Wijk aan Zee, his protégé could do with some sun. He also urged him to work on his physical condition, so that he would feel fit in the final rounds. After all that's when a tournament is being decided, when players get tired and start making mistakes. An apt prediction, as we would see.

So far Carlsen had been playing well, without showing much of the brilliance that had pushed him to stellar heights in Nanjing. But obviously, sharing second place with Kramnik half a point behind Shirov, he was solidly in the race for first place. The big clash we would see in Round 9, after the second rest day, when Carlsen was White against Kramnik. And what a clash it was. The photographers that thronged the board for a chance to catch some out-of-the-ordinary shots (as opposed to man sitting at chess board staring at pieces or glazedly reading bulletin of previous round) were in for a surprise. After the clock had been started, Carlsen, sitting motionless, closed his eyes and didn't open them for almost two minutes. Then, when he finally looked up, as if awakening from a nap, he pushed his d-pawn to d4. Afterwards Kramnik joked that he had not known what to do. Had Carlsen fallen asleep and should he wake him up? The Norwegian himself was unwilling to provide a clue, although he did admit that till the very last moment he had been hesitating between 1.e4 and 1.d4.

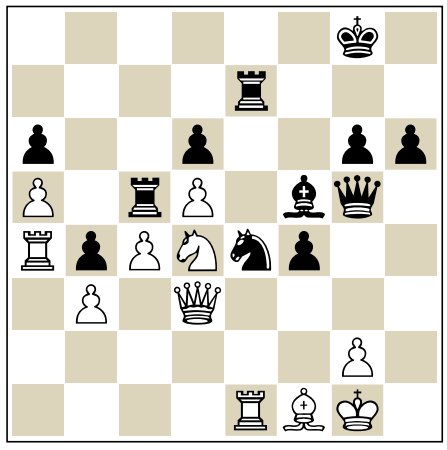
Initially his choice for 1.d4 worked out fine, and he even missed a chance to get a serious advantage on move 18, but the game will largely be remembered for Kramnik's magnificent counterplay and the spectacular victory he scored. When he showed the game to the press, the Russian even called it one of the best games of his career. We feel privileged that he consented to annotate the game in great depth, yet with wondrous lucidity, for this article.

Kramnik took the lead in Round 10 with a draw against Ivanchuk and looked at the near future with optimism. Unlike so often before, when he would fall ill in Wijk aan Zee, he was still in good shape and felt he had the strength to fight for tournament victory. Kramnik advanced to first place when Shirov suffered his second loss. A loss that almost caused a sensation as it was the first win by Vishy Anand after an unusual string of nine draws. Whatever the World Champion tried, he could not get a grip on his play and people were already beginning to wonder if he was really playing in Wijk aan Zee or if someone else had taken his place. After all, there also was a Vishy Anand active on Twitter, who had confused many with his tweets. Calling himself (herself?) Vishy Anand and supporting that claim with a photo of the real Vishy Anand and his parents, he mainly posted innocent and lame comments, but exposed himself as a fraud when he boasted that in Wijk aan Zee it was time to show who was the boss, not exactly the language the real Anand would use.

Anand came to Wijk aan Zee with the wish to do well, but obviously felt somewhat restrained by his upcoming match against Topalov. As he put it afterwards: 'I simply needed some time to get going and sometimes you get stuck in ruts. I kept getting

the opposite of what I intended. I was aiming for something and I didn't manage to guess properly and possibly some of my choices in the beginning were mistakes. Not because they didn't work but because I should have tried something else.' But then came his lucky break against Shirov, a game that, as Carlsen commented afterwards, followed 'the standard recipe': 'Vishy is brilliant in defending this kind of position and counter-attacking. The most likely scenario was that Shirov would play for an attack, get into time-trouble and miss a winning combination.'

Carlsen was right and this was the winning combination Shirov missed:



Anand-Shirov
position after 38...♗f5

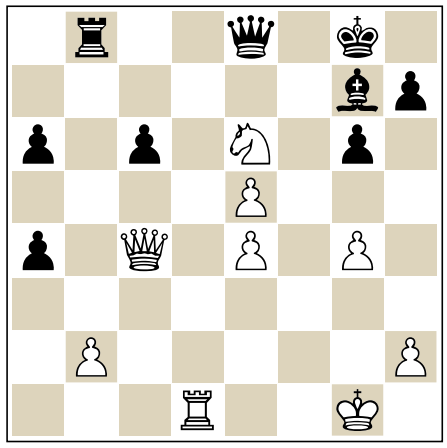
39.♘e6? A mistake shortly before the time-control. White should have played 39.♖xb4, when Black retains a slight advantage with 39...♖c8. **39...♖xe6?** Shirov doesn't see the opportunity that he is offered. He could have forced a draw with 39...♗xe6 40.♕xe4 ♖cc7 41.dxe6 ♕c5+, but winning is the amazing 39...♘g3! (threatening ...♕h4), with the point that 40.♘xg5 loses to 40...♖xe1. **40.dxe6 ♖e5 41.♖xb4** Now White was in command and went on to win in 55 moves.

NEW IN CHESS

As Magnus Carlsen sat with his eyes closed for two minutes, his opponent Vladimir Kramnik wondered if he'd fallen asleep and if he should wake him up.

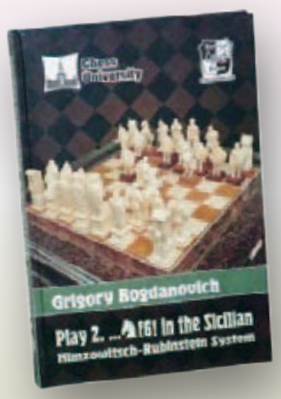
That day Carlsen himself bounced back with admirable composure and played, as he explains in his notes to this game further on, his best game in Wijk aan Zee. And it is indeed amazing to see how a world-class player like Sergey Karjakin, as White, starts to err in a fairly normal position and finds himself in a hopeless situation only some eight moves later.

Carlsen continued to fight for his last chances in Round 11 and was rewarded for his risky play against Leinier Dominguez when the Cuban, after a tough and cool-headed defence, made one crucial mistake.



Carlsen-Dominguez
position after 30.♕xc4

White's position looks threatening, but how threatening is it really? **30...♔h8?** A human reac-



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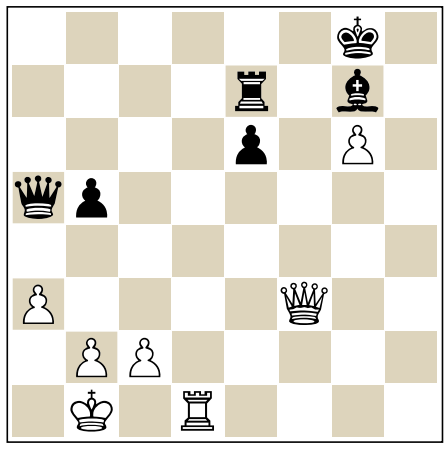
tion, stepping out of the queen's fire line. But in fact Black could have played 30...♗xe5 and now, for instance, 31.♖f1 ♕e7 32.♘g5+ ♔h8 33.♘f7+ ♔g7 34.♘xe5 ♕xe5 35.♖f7+ ♔h8, with a draw. **31.♘xg7 ♔xg7 32.e6** Now Black is lost. He faces a dangerous passed pawn and will soon lose his c-pawn. **32...♖b7 33.♕c3+ ♔g8 34.♖d6 ♖e7 35.♖xc6 ♕f8 36.♖c8** Carlsen wraps up comfortably. **36...♖e8 37.♖xe8 ♕xe8 38.♕f6 ♕c8 39.♔g2 ♕c2+ 40.♔h3 ♕c5 41.♔h4 ♕b4 42.♕f7+ ♔h8 43.e7 ♕e1+ 44.♔g5 ♕e3+ 45.♕f4** Black resigned.

With two rounds to go Carlsen and Kramnik, who had to work hard in a Petroff to make a draw against Shirov, were sharing the lead. They were half a point ahead of Shirov and a most comfortable one and a half points clear of a group of four: Anand, Nakamura, Ivanchuk and Karjakin. The pairings in the final two rounds favoured the Norwegian, but before he could call himself the undisputed 2010 Corus champion, Carlsen needed the assistance of various colleagues. To begin with he owed a big thank you to Vishy Anand, who played his best game in Round 12 at the expense of Kramnik. Or, as the World Champion put it himself, bearing in mind his first win against Shirov, 'I am only here to spoil other people's tournaments'. In a way he was, but the way he unsettled Kramnik's Petroff and took advantage of the Russian's forgetfulness was most impressive.

As Carlsen, with black, easily held the draw against Peter Leko, who was convinced that the novelty he was treated to was one of Kasparov's, the top-seed entered the last round half a point ahead of Kramnik and Shirov. All three of them were White in their last game, but Carlsen seemed to have the 'easiest' opponent, Fabiano Caruana. Indeed, Kramnik had run out of steam and soon resigned himself to a draw against Karjakin. But the two other key games kept the spectators and journalists glued to the screens for many hours.

Everything seemed up in the air when Carlsen ended up in a highly suspect position against Caruana and Shirov tried his best to muddy the waters against Dominguez. The tension reached a peak when in raging time-trouble Shirov conjured up poisonous tactical tricks and Dominguez's position suddenly hung by a thread. A thread that threatened to snap when after 30 moves Dominguez offered a draw in the following position:



Shirov-Dominguez
position after 30...♗g7

NEW IN CHESS

Leinier Dominguez didn't realize how dramatic his draw offer turned out to be.

Down to his last seconds Shirov sat frantically looking for a killer blow. As the seconds ticked away he failed to see anything forcing, and realizing that he was about to lose on time he quickly accepted the draw offer. Dominguez had not seen either what all computers and, as a consequence, everyone else had seen by that time: White could have forced Black's resignation (had he made the moves quickly enough) with 31.b4, when after 31...♕c7 32.♕a8+ ♗f8 (still seen by Dominguez, although he believed it would hold) 33.♖f1 the bishop on f8 drops off.

For Carlsen this was not yet the end of the ordeal, as he still had to save his own game. This he managed, in part with the help of Caruana, in part thanks to his tenacity (as you can read in Caruana's notes to this thriller). After

close to six hours of play Carlsen was sole winner (he shared first place with Aronian in 2008) of the Corus tournament for the first time in his career.

At the end of a mesmerizing and gripping last round the reactions of the main protagonists contributed to the conviction that the 2010 edition had been one of the most exciting Corus tournaments in years.

Alexey Shirov was not in the least shocked that he had missed (shared) tournament victory by one move. He had not seen the win, so why should he whine? 'I understood that I probably should have kept on playing, but I didn't have much time. And I didn't see b4; I was only considering queen c6. I couldn't evaluate it very clearly, whether I was better or equal or worse, even. Then I remembered that he had offered me a draw and I thought, maybe that's the safest way.' The chance he missed against Anand he found more painful, but that moment could not spoil his overall feeling of satisfaction either: 'I felt OK before the tournament, I felt OK during the tournament, I feel OK now.'

As might have been expected, Vladimir Kramnik didn't cherish such feelings of contentment (apart from the pleasant memories of his win against Carlsen), but his dissatisfaction didn't concern his loss against Anand or the fact that for the fourth time running he had had an extra Black (although he admitted that this was getting annoying, particularly for a player who cherishes his white games), but the overall level of his opening preparation. 'My openings were really going wrong here. It was such a disaster. Something I haven't experienced for quite a while, since the match in Bonn when it appeared that my opponent was 10 times better prepared than me. I had the same feeling here. Most of the time I was getting completely nothing with white and most of the time I was under pressure with black. I have to think about this. If you want to win tournaments like this you at least have to do decently in the opening. I had something like five worse positions, which is simply impossible. Of course I am disappointed by the end of the tournament, but objectively speaking I squeezed the maximum out of the positions I got. With such positions it's a big achievement to make plus three. I have very mixed feelings, such strange games. On the other hand, some games were really good, so I don't know what to think.'

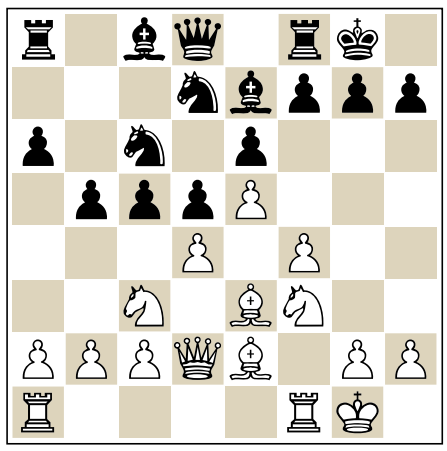
Magnus Carlsen was delighted with his victory, but knew well enough that it hadn't been a smooth ride and that he had not won fully on his own strength. 'What I am satisfied with is that I managed to pull myself together both in some games and in general in the tournament after I lost to Kramnik. Of course, a lot of things went my way in the last few rounds, but it would be fair to say that both Kramnik and Shirov definitely had their share of luck earlier in the tournament. I don't think it was unfair that I won in the end.'

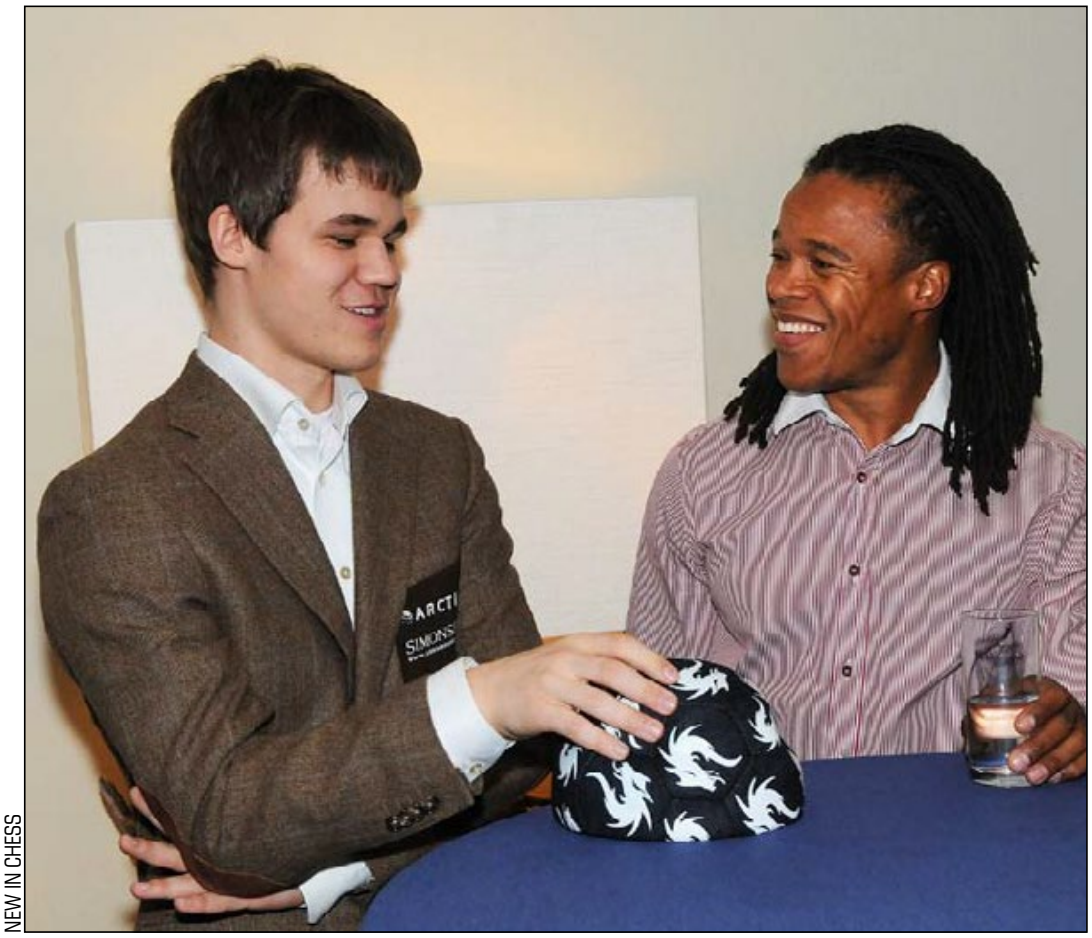
Following his superlative win in Nanjing and his first place in the world rankings, expectations have often been unrealistically high and he admits that he himself has also been struggling with his own expectations. 'Yes, in a way I do. After Nanjing, where almost everything went as well as it could have, I find it hard to be completely satisfied even with results as +4 here or +3 in London. Because I feel that even though the result is good, I could do even better. But the score is good. I won shared first with +3 here in 2008. Karjakin won outright with +3 last year, so it's a good score.'

NOTES BY
Magnus Carlsen

FR 4.4 – C11
Sergey Karjakin
Magnus Carlsen
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (10)

1.e4 e6!?
The French Defence. In my younger years I used to consider it at best a second-rate opening, and I once even lost a bet with one of my friends, and as a result had to play 1...e6 in all my black games in a Super-GM tournament. Fortunately my friend was greedy, and took money instead. I believe that both 1...c5 and 1...e5! are better choices, but since I desperately wanted to win this game (I was trailing the leaders Kramnik and Shirov by a point at this stage) I decided to try something new.
2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6
The other main move here is 3...♗b4, which is rather more controversial. Some think it gives Black good counterplay, while others regard it as a simple positional mistake to give up the bishop too early.
4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♗e3 ♗e7
Other options here are the relatively slow 7...a6, or the more concrete 7...cxd4, followed by ...♕b6, or 7...♕b6 immediately, both of which are rated quite highly by Wesley So and his Rybka (see New In Chess 2010/1).
8.♕d2 0-0 9.♗e2 a6 10.0-0 b5

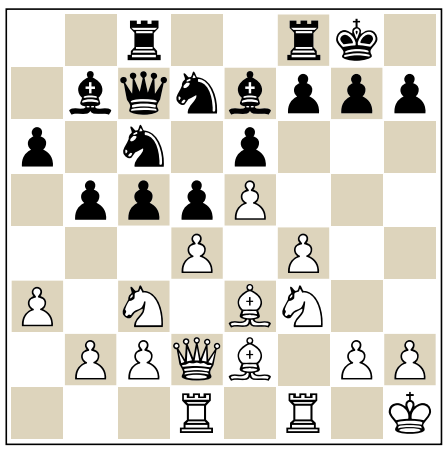




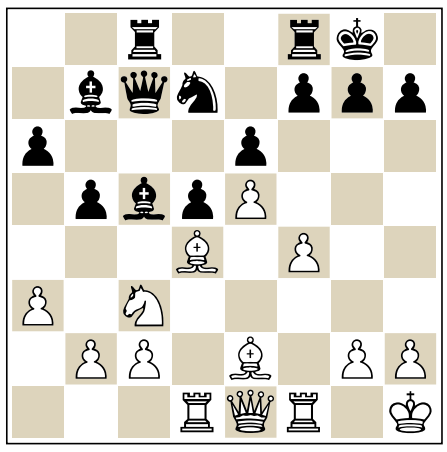
NEW IN CHESS

At the farewell party Magnus Carlsen was pleasantly surprised by a visit of football star Edgar Davids (Ajax, Barcelona Juventus, AC Milan, etc.), who is a devoted chess player these days.

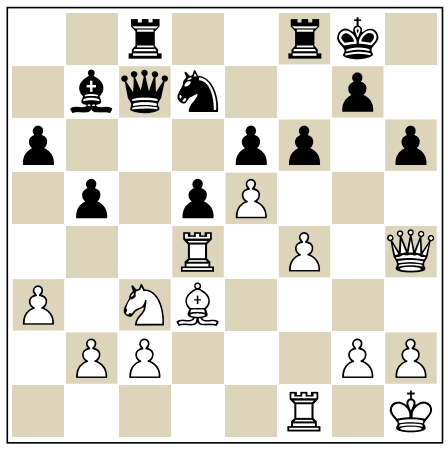
11.♔h1!?
An interesting and quite unusual move. 11.a3 or 11.♘d1 are the normal moves here. The text is actually a quite cunning waiting move, as ...b4 and ...a5/...♗a6 (the normal reply to ♘d1) can now be met by ♘a4, while ...♗b7 (one of several possible replies to a3) can be met by ♘d1. Then Black will probably have to play ...b4 and ...a5/...♗a6 anyway, but with a tempo less.
Therefore I decided to be more flexible, and make a more or less useful waiting move.
11...♕c7 12.a3 ♗b7 13.♖ad1 ♖ac8



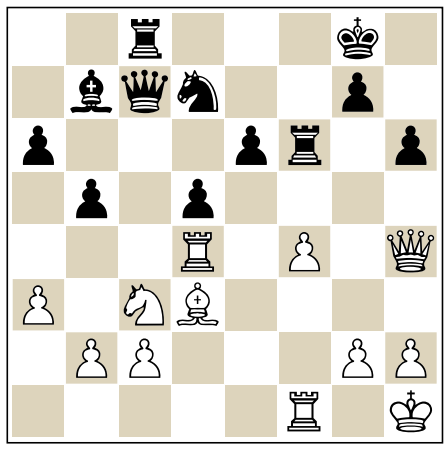
14.♕e1 A typical manoeuvre. White intends to gradually start an attack on the kingside, which is why I decided to start counterplay in the centre immediately.
14...cxd4 15.♘xd4 ♘xd4 16.♗xd4 ♗c5



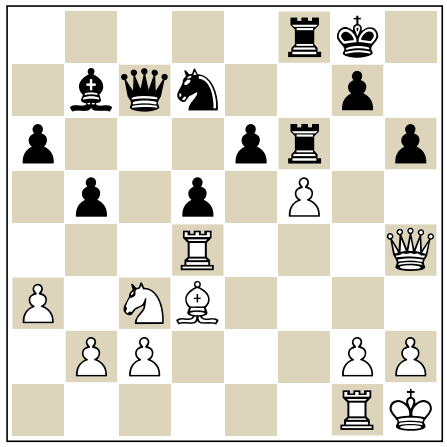
17.♕h4?
While this move might objectively speaking not deserve a question mark, it was definitely a turning point in the game, as after my reply, Karjakin got very uncomfortable with his position.
17.♕f2 or something similar was required, as the queen needs to have more influence in the centre after I play ...f6, which is bound to happen sooner or later.
17...♗xd4 18.♖xd4 f6! 19.♗d3
This probably won't help much either, but since it was part of the plan with ♕h4, I will not give it a question mark.
19...h6

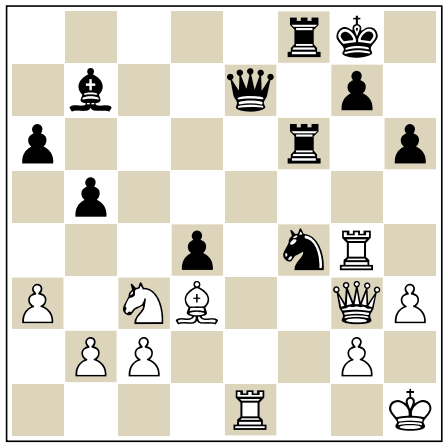


20.exf6 20.♕g4 ♕b6! would not help White, while 20.f5 fxe5 21.♖g4 ♘f6 stops any illusions of a white attack.
20...♖xf6 Now it is clear that something has gone wrong for White. The rook on d4 is exposed, f4 is weak, and he will be facing tactical problems with ...e5 quite soon. The 'bad' bishop on b7 is certainly no worse than the white knight, which has dominated it in so many textbook games.



21.f5
21.♖g1 ♖cf8 22.♘e2 e5 23.fxe5 ♘xe5 would not have been much of a relief – the black pieces are just so much more active than their white counterparts here.
21.♕g3 ♖cf8 22.♖f3 ♘b8! leaves White on the brink of disaster.
21...♖cf8 22.♖g1





ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

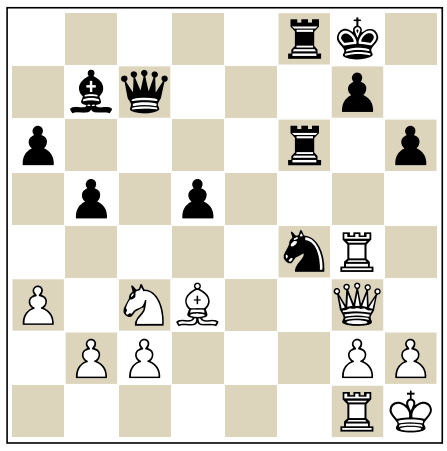
22...♘c5!

The most energetic approach. The tempting 22...e5 23.♘xd5 ♗xd5 24.♖xd5 ♘b6, trapping the rook, gives White very good drawing chances after 25.♕e4 ♘xd5 26.♕xd5+ ♔h8 27.♖e1.

23.fxe6 ♘xe6 24.♖g4?!

24.♘xd5 ♗xd5 25.♖xd5 ♘f4 26.♖d4 ♕c5 forces White to give up the exchange with 27.♖xf4, as 27.c3 ♘xd3 28.♖xd3 ♕xg1+ 29.♔xg1 ♖f1 is mate. That being said, it would probably have been a better try.

24...♘f4 25.♕g3



25...♕e7!

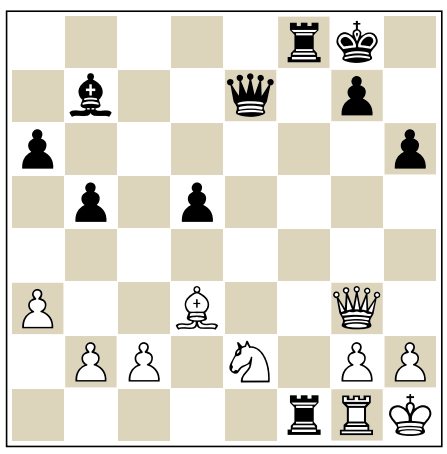
The last key move, after which Black is completely winning. The point is to control e2, leaving the white knight without a good square after ...d4 next. The tactical justification, based on a slightly surprising queen sac, is:

26.♖xf4

After this Black will have to make only a couple of good moves to win the game, but White was probably lost in any case, as witness 26.h3 d4 27.♖e1 27...♕xe1+! 28.♕xe1 ♘xd3, and Black will be material up in every line. Alternatively, instead of 27.♖e1, 27.♘e2 ♘xe2 28.♗xe2 ♗c8! wins an exchange, while 27.♘d1 ♗c8 28.♖e1 ♕f7 29.♖h4 ♗b7 30.♖g1 ♘xg2! (30...g5 is also very good, of course) 31.♖xg2 ♖f3 32.♕g4 ♖e8 leaves the uncoordinated white forces defenceless against the threat of 33...♖e1+.

26...♖xf4 27.♘e2 27.♕g6 ♖8f6 28.♕h7+ ♔f7 is obviously not dangerous. **27...♖f1**

27...♖h4, with the idea of 28.♕g6 ♖xh2+, and mate, was tempting, but I could not refute the considerably stronger 28.c3.



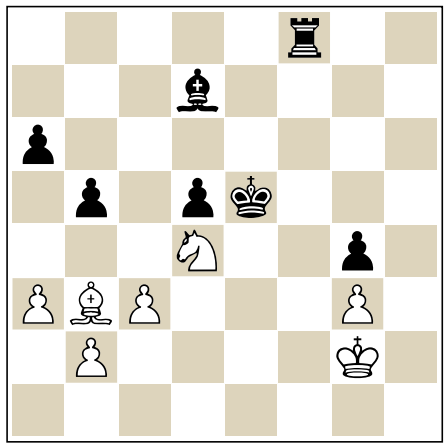
28.♘d4

Now Black can force a queen swap, but 28.h3 ♖xg1+ 29.♔xg1 ♕c5+ 30.♔h2 d4!, finally activating the bishop, was hardly stronger.

28...♖xg1+ 29.♔xg1 ♖e8

With the queens on the board White could perhaps have hoped to resist, but without queens the extra exchange is bound to count, even though the knight on d4 is keeping the position together for the moment.

30.h4 ♕e1+ 31.♔h2 ♕xg3+ 32.♔xg3 ♔f7 33.♔f2 ♔f6 34.g3 ♗c8 35.c3 ♗g4 36.♗c2 g5 37.hxg5+ hxg5 38.♗b3 ♔e5 39.♗c2 ♖f8+ 40.♔g2 ♗d7 41.♘f3+ ♔f6 42.♗b3 g4 43.♘d4 ♔e5



Now the white king is cut off, and the undermining ...a5/...b4 cannot be prevented. **44.♗c2 a5 45.♗d1 ♔e4** White resigned. My best game in Corus 2010!

NOTES BY

Vladimir Kramnik

CA 3.1 – E04

Magnus Carlsen

Vladimir Kramnik

Wijk aan Zee 2010 (9)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.g3

In his preparations for the game Magnus apparently considered that the Catalan was my weakest point. I had not expected this opening, and so I thought for a few minutes and decided, in turn, to surprise Carlsen – I chose the variation which in recent times I have usually played.

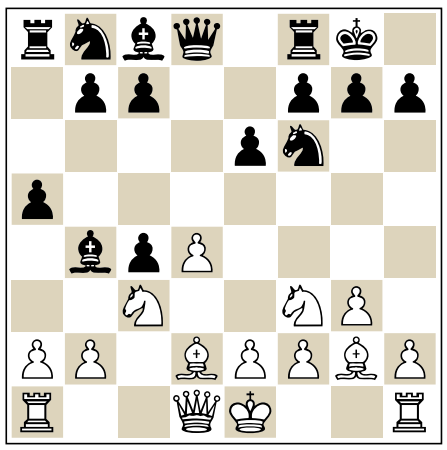
4...dxc4 5.♗g2 ♗b4+ 6.♗d2 a5

Until the end of the 1990s this variation practically did not exist, but it became popular after it was employed by Topalov in his match with me in 2006. It is a strange variation, but up till now it has not been refuted. Be my guest!

7.♘c3

The fashionable move in recent times. Against Topalov I played 7.♕c2, and a later rapid game of mine with Navara went 7.0-0 0-0 8.♗g5. Although I won both games, I did not obtain anything special from the opening. Generally speaking, as I understand it, the Catalan is virtually the only opening in which the best development square for the queen's knight is usually d2.

7...0-0

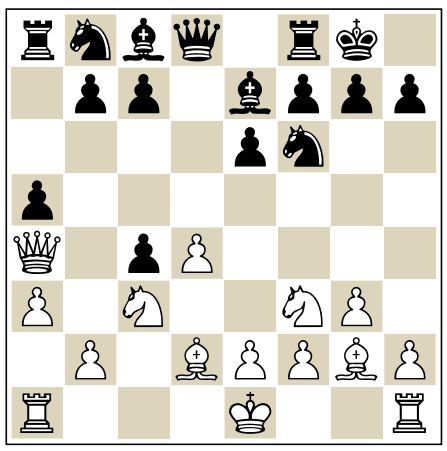


8.a3

This logical move had occurred only once, in a game between two not very strong players. Boris Gelfand played 8.♗g5, which after 8...b5 9.♘e5 ♖a6 led to a complicated, unclear position (Gelfand-Kramnik, Moscow 2009).

I had not analysed 8.a3 seriously at home, but had simply judged that the bishop should be retreated, since after 8...♗xc3 9.bxc3 White has long-term compensation for the pawn, and besides, in this position the inclusion of the moves a3 and a5 is most probably in his favour.

8...♗e7! 9.♕a4



NEW IN CHESS

Vladimir Kramnik: 'In his preparations for the game Magnus apparently considered that the Catalan was my weakest point.'

9...c6!

Black's idea looks rather strange: first he captures on c4, trying to cling on to the extra pawn with all his might, when suddenly for no apparent reason he gives it back. But there is a logic in this: while White is capturing on c4 with his queen, Black succeeds in expanding on the queenside – the white pieces inevitably come under attack with gain of tempo (...b7-b5, and at some point ...b5-b4). Consequently, taking into account the time spent by Black on ...♗f8-b4-e7, we obtain a more or less normal version of the Catalan.

10.♕xc4 b5 11.♕b3

11.♕d3 also came into consideration, although it also would not have set Black any great problems: 11...♘bd7 12.♘e4 (12.0-0 is met by the typical 12...♗a6, with the unpleasant threat of 13...b4) 12...♘xe4 13.♕xe4 ♗b7 14.0-0 ♕b6, and it is doubtful whether White can prevent ...c6-c5.

11...♗a6

From this point I began aiming to sharpen the play. Possibly I overestimated the situation. In principle, I could have acted more calmly. For example, after 11...♘bd7 12.♗g5 ♗b7 13.0-0 h6 14.♗xf6 ♘xf6 15.♖fd1 ♕b8 (the immediate 15...b4 is also possible) Black need not hurry with ...c6-c5 and can play this later. I think that in such a position, when White's dark-squared bishop has been removed from the board, and his knight is at c3 instead of d2, sooner or later Black will advance ...c6-c5 and completely equalize.

12.♗g5 The correct decision. White must do something to oppose Black's clear plan involving ...♘bd7, ...b4 and ...c5.

12...♘bd7 13.♗xf6

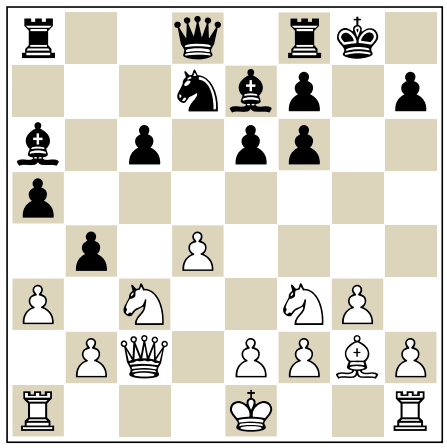
The only move that is able to set Black any problems.

13...gxf6?

Here I certainly became carried away by my desire to complicate the game. Obviously 13...♘xf6 was bad because of 14.♘e5, when the c6 pawn is lost.

However, after 13...♗xf6 14.♘e4 ♗e7 15.0-0 b4 (it is also possible not to hurry, by playing 15...♕b6) 16.♕c2 bxa3 17.bxa3 h6 18.♖fd1 ♕c7 Black has no particular problems, although his winning chances are also nil.

14.♕c2 b4



15.♘a4

The natural move, which Magnus made quite quickly, although 15.♘d1!? was interesting. The idea is to bring the knight closer to the kingside. Say, if 15...c5 then 16.♘e3 (the pawn sacrifice 16.d5 exd5 17.♘e3 is also possible).

15...♖c8

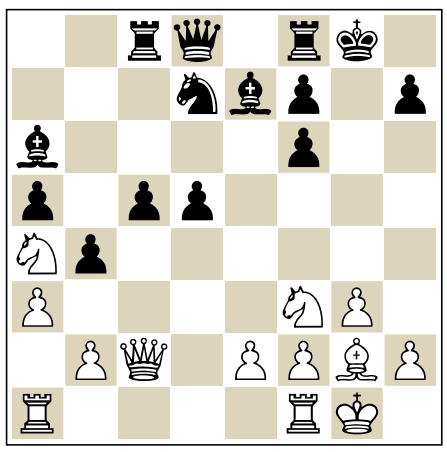
In the light of what follows, to some extent this is a waste of a tempo.

However, I was not sure that in the event of the immediate 15...c5 Black would be able to regain the pawn, for example, after 16.dxc5 ♖c8 17.axb4 axb4 18.♕e4. Also, 16.0-0 cxd4 17.♘xd4 ♖c8 18.♕e4 did not greatly appeal to me.

16.0-0

White's only chance of fighting for an advantage involves a pawn sacrifice. On the other hand, the play takes on a character which is possibly not altogether in keeping with Magnus's style.

16...c5 17.d5! exd5



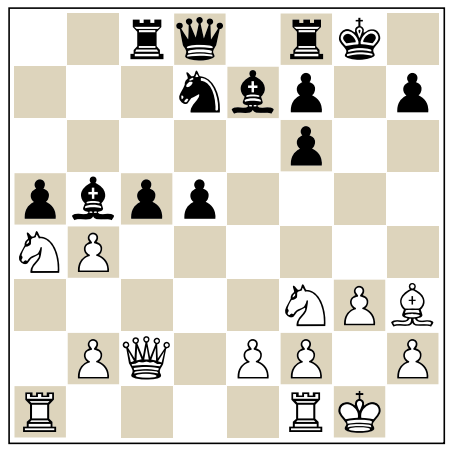
18.♗h3?

After a long think Carlsen takes, in my view, a conceptually incorrect decision, disrupting the rhythm of the attack with the manoeuvre ♗h3-f5-h7.

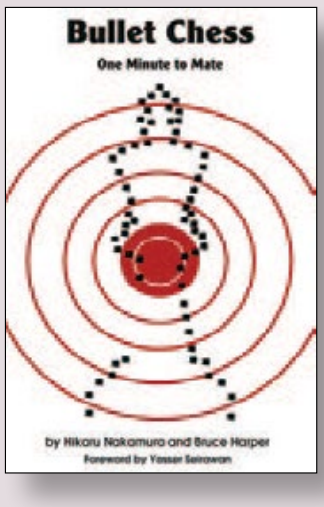
The most logical move was 18.♘h4, and I think that in a blitz game most players would make it instantly. Nevertheless, it is not so terrible: after 18...♘e5 19.♘f5 ♖e8 followed by 20...♗f8 Black has a reasonable position.

18.♖fd1! was very strong, when Black unexpectedly has serious problems. After the critical 18...d4 White has the extremely unpleasant 19.♕f5. In advance I had intended 19...♖e8 here, and if 20.♘xd4 cxd4 21.♗e4 – 21...♘f8, but White calmly plays 21.♖xd4 and Black is in trouble. Virtually the only move for Black is 19...♗d6, but the position clearly favours White.

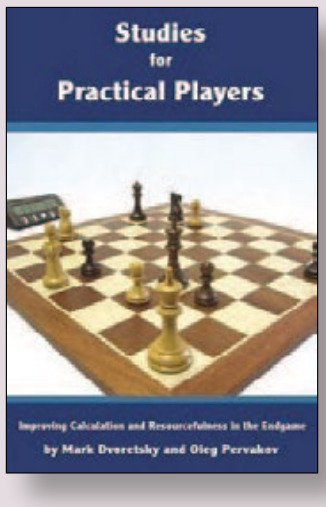
18...♗b5 19.axb4



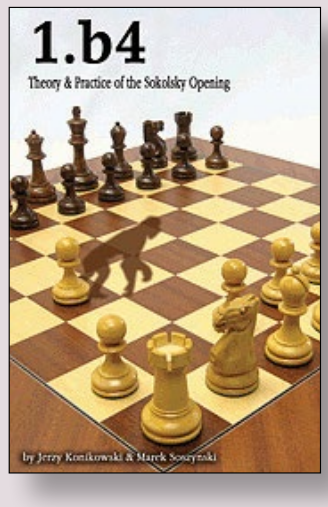
Three great new books by Russell Enterprises!



Nakamura teaches blitz



Endgame training by Dvoretsky & Pervakov



The Sokolsky reloaded

19...axb4

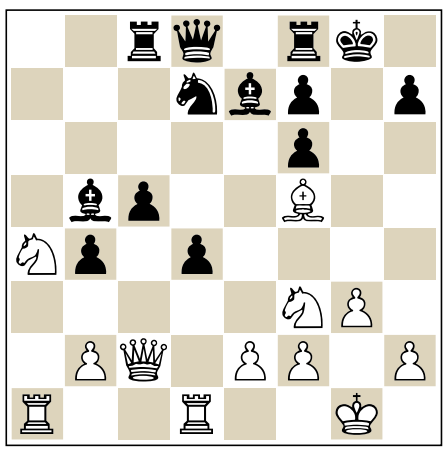
Of course, not the computer recommendation 19...cxb4 in view of 20.♕d2 – the d4-square is conceded to the knight. Black's main trump is the bad position of the knight on a4.

20.♖fd1

Too late!

20...d4 21.♗f5?!

A continuation of the faulty plan. The release of the knight on a4 is far more important than the h7 pawn. 21.♕e4 is dangerous only at first sight – after 21...♖e8 White has no great threats. But the simple 21.b3 was quite unpleasant for Black. After, for example, 21...♖e8 22.♗f5 h5 23.♘b2 ♕c7 24.♘c4 White has definitely sufficient compensation for the pawn, and his game is far more pleasant and easier to play. Carlsen most probably missed my next move.



21...♘e5!

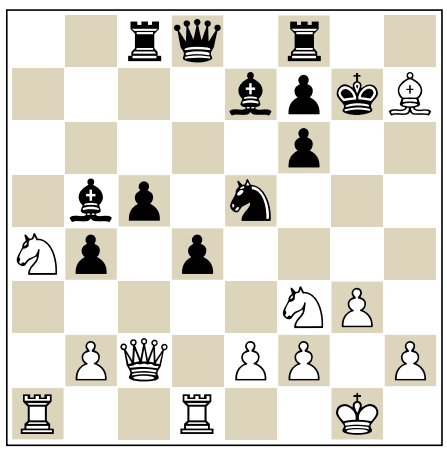
The correct decision. After the computer recommendation 21...♔g7 White can revert to the play involving 22.b3, in an improved version. Now, however, Black seizes the initiative.

22.♗xh7+

White should probably have reverted to the plan with a blockade on the light squares: 22.♘xe5 fxe5 23.b3 (the light-squared bishop is no weaker than a rook, and therefore I would not capture on c8) 23...♕d6 (not paying any attention to the exchange; after 23...♖a8, in my opinion, White retains the advantage – 24.♗xh7+ ♔g7 25.♗e4 ♖a7 26.♘b2, with pleasant and enduring pressure) 24.♗xc8 ♖xc8 25.♘b2 ♕e6 – and it seems to me that Black has sufficient compensation for the exchange, as he has lifted the blockade on the light squares.

I should mention that if 22.♗xc8, apart from 22...♕xc8 there is the extremely unpleasant 22...d3!.

22...♔g7



23.♘xe5

Now White can no longer comfortably play b2-b3. For example, 23.b3 ♘g6, exchanging the bishop (or 23...d3 24.♗xd3 ♗xd3 25.♖xd3 ♘xd3 26.exd3 f5).

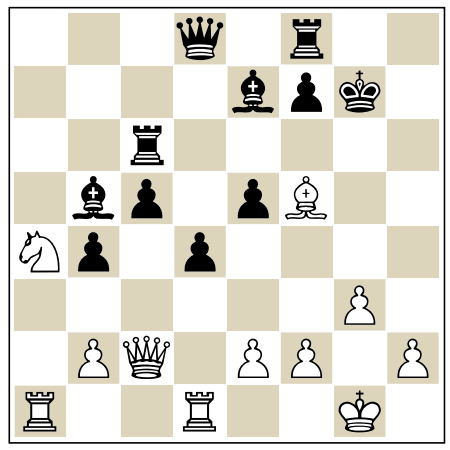
And in the event of 23.♗e4 there is the very unpleasant 23...b3!, when after 24.♕xb3 (24.♕d2 ♖h8) 24...♗xe2 25.♘h4 ♗g4 26.♕c2 c4 27.f3 ♗e6 the knight at a4 is still out of play, and Black has a clear initiative.

23...fxe5 24.♗f5

If 24.b3 Black has several interesting possibilities. I would probably have played 24...♖h8 (after 24...c4 25.♗f5 the situation is not so clear; for example, 25...c3 26.♕e4, and although Black is winning strategically, he might be losing tactically...) 25.♗d3 c4 (or the quieter 25...♗xd3 26.exd3 ♖c6 27.♕e2 ♕d5 with approximate equality) 26.bxc4 ♗c6 27.♗f5 ♖b8, and here I would take Black's side – for the pawn he has a strong passed b-pawn, two bishops and in general a rather active position. However, White also has his trumps.

24...♖c6

An important manoeuvre.



25.♕e4?!

Dr. Tarrasch would have angrily scolded my young opponent. It was time, finally, to bring the knight into play: after 25.b3! ♖h8 26.♕e4 (26.♘b2 ♖ch6 27.h3 ♗c6) 26...♖ch6 the computer does not see anything more than a draw after both 27.♘xc5 ♗xc5 28.♕xe5+ ♕f6 29.♕xc5 ♗xe2 30.♕xd4 ♖xh2 31.♗e4, and 27.♕xe5+ ♗f6 28.♕e4 ♖xh2 29.♘xc5 ♖h1+ 30.♔g2 ♖1h2+ 31.♔g1. True, it is hard for a human to go in for such a variation: it is obvious that after the doubling of rooks on the h-file White may get mated. Apparently it was this that concerned Magnus.

25...♖h8

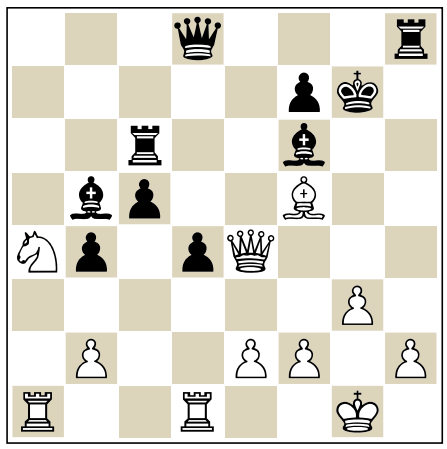
25...♕c7 was also possible, but this move slows the development of Black's initiative. For example, 26.♕g4+ ♖g6 27.♗xg6 fxg6 28.b3 c4 29.bxc4 ♕xc4 – Black is a clear exchange down, but, according to one authoritative opinion, he has enough for equality. I reckoned that in this position it was not necessary to cling onto material, but at any cost to advance ...c5-c4, completely cutting off the knight on a4.

26.♕xe5+

White misses the last chance to switch to the variation 26.b3 ♖ch6 and, apparently, make a draw there. Or perhaps Magnus overrated his position – it seems that from time to time he suffers from this fault – as, however, do I. How-

ever, in this respect we are both still far behind Levon...

26...♗f6 27.♕e4

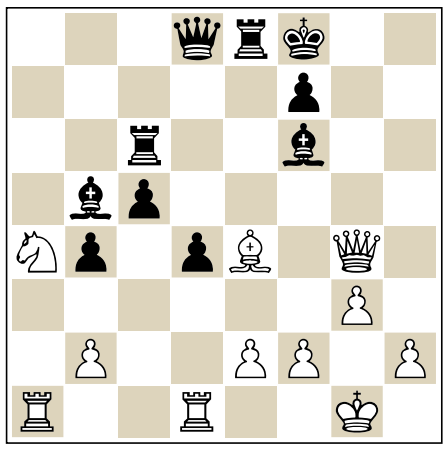


27...♖e8!

A very important move. Black would like to play 27...c4 immediately, but after 28.♕g4+ ♔f8 29.♗d7 the problem is not so much the threat of ♗xc6, but rather his lack of useful moves. Now White objectively stands rather worse, and he has to think in terms of how to escape.

28.♕g4+ ♔f8 29.♗e4?!

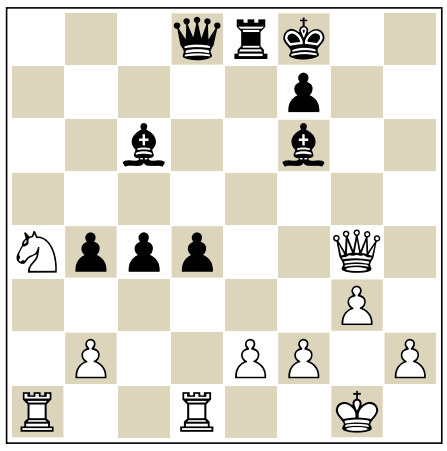
Another mystery – why did Carlsen not play 29.♗d7 ? The position arising after 29...♗xe2 30.♕h3 ♗xd1 31.♖xd1 ♖ee6 (in the event of 31...♖c7 32.♗xe8 ♕xe8 33.♘b6 White succeeds in creating counterplay) 32.♗xe6 fxe6 33.b3 ♕d5 is assessed by the computer as slightly better for Black. It is hard to say what this may signify – Black has a very powerful centre, and if he can set it in motion, White will be unable to save the game. On the other hand, his king is exposed and therefore White has counterplay. I think that Magnus, in playing more ambitiously, underestimated my next move.



29...c4! 30.♗xc6

By now Magnus had apparently realized just how unpleasant White's position was, and here he thought for a long time. The strongest move was the seemingly pointless 30.♗f3. After very serious consideration, the computer produces the following line: 30...♗g7 31.♕f5 ♖e5 32.♕f4, and for the moment White holds on – but that's not the way humans play chess...

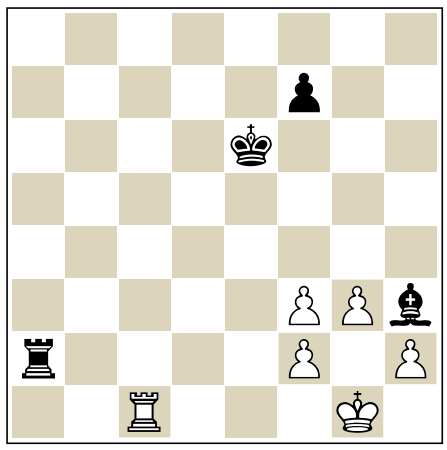
30...♗xc6



31.♕h5

White's position is now critical, and he has practically no moves: his rook on a1 and knight on a4 are shut out of the game. Black has a powerful pawn centre and the two bishops. For example, after 31.♔f1 ♕d5 32.f3 ♗b5 White is effectively stalemated, whereas Black is threatening to begin advancing his powerful pawns. Here Magnus used nearly all his time remaining to the control (although with the 30-second addition this is not so terrible) and found an interesting practical chance.

I mainly tried to work out what seemed to me to be objectively the strongest continuation: 31.♘c5 ♕d5 32.♕f3 ♕xf3 (32...♕d6? 33.♖a6) 33.exf3 d3 34.♘xd3 (after 34.♖a6 ♗xf3 35.♘d7+ ♔e7 36.♘xf6 ♗xd1 37.♘xe8 d2 Black wins) 34...cxd3 35.♖xd3 ♗xb2 36.♖b1 ♗c3 37.♖c1 ♗b5 38.♖d5 ♖b8 39.♖c5 ♗d7 (an important resource – the bishop succeeds in reaching h3) 40.♖5xc3 bxc3 41.♖xc3 ♗h3 42.♖c1 ♖b2 43.♖e1 ♖a2 44.♖d1 ♔e7 45.♖c1 ♔e6.



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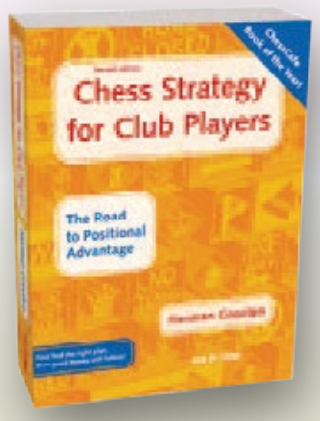

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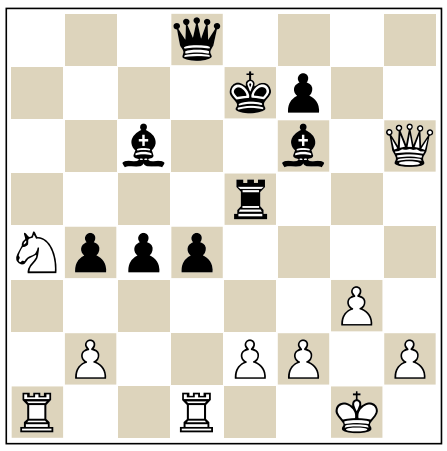
I don't know whether or not this position is won – a separate analysis is required. I will not be surprised if it is nevertheless won.

31...♖e5 32.♕h6+ ♔e7?

My opponent was in time-trouble, so I decided not to allow him time for thought, and I quickly made this move.

After the correct 32...♔g8! I did not like the fact that after the tactical 33.♘b6 the knight comes into play. Had I spent a couple of minutes, I would surely have seen the reply 33...♖e6 or even the simple 33...♖xe2, when the knight is not going anywhere – if 34.♘xc4 there is 34...♕d5. White would apparently have had to play 33.♕f4, but here Black has a mass of good continuations, the simplest being 33...♕d5 34.f3 ♗g5 35.♕g4 d3 36.exd3 cxd3 37.♘b6 ♕c5+ 38.♔g2 ♕xb6 39.♖xd3 ♕c5. It can be said that 32...♔g8! would have practically concluded the game.



33.e4

Very resourceful, although objectively incorrect. This move does not yet completely spoil the situation, but here White had two clear-cut, although not at all simple, ways to achieve a draw.

The first is 33.♕d2! ♕d5 34.f3 (weaker is 34.♕xb4+ ♔e8 35.f3 ♖xe2 36.♖d2 d3 37.♕b8+ ♗d8 38.♖xe2+ dxe2 39.♖e1 ♕d4+ 40.♔g2 ♕e3 41.♕f4 ♕xf4 42.♖xe2+ ♔f8 43.gxf4 ♗xa4) 34...c3 35.♕xd4 ♕xd4+ 36.♖xd4 c2 (or 36...cxb2 37.♘xb2 ♖xe2 38.♖a7+ ♔f8 39.♖xb4 ♗xb2, and Black cannot win this position) 37.♖c4 (the only move) 37...♗xa4 38.♔f2 (or 38.♖xa4 b3 39.♔f2 – White loses after 39.♖c7+? ♔d6 40.♖ac4 ♖c5! 41.♖7xc5 ♗d4+ 42.♔f1 ♗xc5) 38...♖b5 39.♖xa4 b3 40.♖c7+ (yet another trap: 40.♖a3 ♖c5! 41.♖xc5 ♗d4+ 42.♔g2 ♗xc5 43.♖a1 ♗d4, and Black again wins thanks to tactics) 40...♔f8 41.♖ac4 ♗xb2 42.♖xc2 bxc2 43.♖xc2, with an obvious draw.

And the second: 33.♕f4! ♕d5 34.e4 ♕xe4 35.♕xe4 ♖xe4 36.♘c5, and although White's position looks dangerous, he just succeeds in gaining a draw: 36...♖e2 (or 36...♖e5 37.♖a7+ ♔f8 38.♘d7+ ♗xd7 39.♖xd7 ♖e2 40.♖7xd4 ♗xd4 41.♖xd4) 37.♔f1 (an important resource) 37...d3 38.♖a7+ ♔f8 39.♖a6 ♗d4 40.♖xc6 ♖xf2+ 41.♔e1 ♖e2+ 42.♔f1, and Black has to be satisfied with perpetual check.

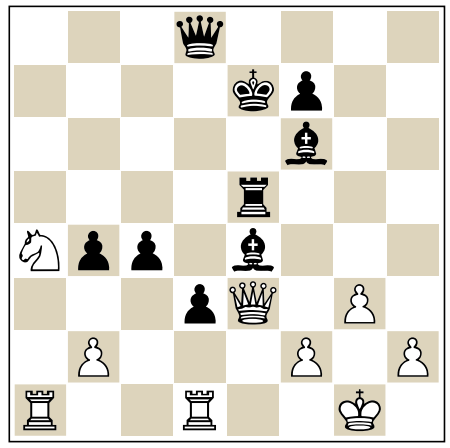
Of course, these variations are very difficult to calculate with just one and a half minutes on the clock.

33...d3 34.♕e3

The computer suggests 34.♖e1, a completely unfeasible move in a practical game, and reckons that White can still somehow hold on – 34...♕d4 35.♕d2 ♔e8 (35...♖b5 36.♖e3 c3 37.bxc3 bxc3 38.♘xc3 ♕xc3 39.♕xc3 ♗xc3 40.♖d1) 36.♕xb4 d2 37.♘c3 dxe1♕+ 38.♖xe1 ♗e7 39.♕b8+ ♗d8. Black is certainly better, but it is not so easy to win.

34...♗xe4

Again quickly played, intensifying the pressure. 34...♖xe4 35.♕a7+ ♔e8! 36.♕c5 (36.♖e1 ♕d5! 37.♘b6 d2 38.♖ed1 ♕e5) 36...♕d5 37.♕xd5 ♗xd5 also came into consideration, with winning chances.



35.♘b6?

In a difficult position, and short of time, White cracks under the pressure and blunders. It would appear that all our recent mistakes were associated with the fact that we were both excessively interested in the fate of the white knight.

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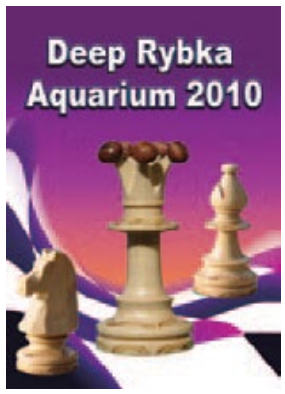

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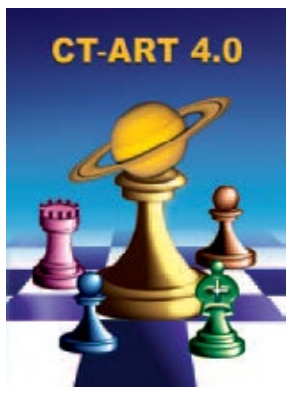

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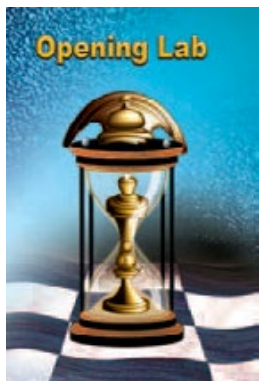

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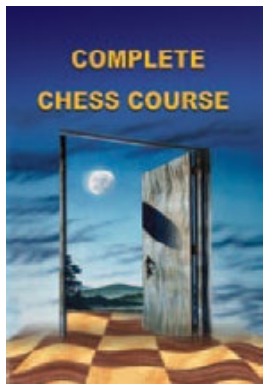

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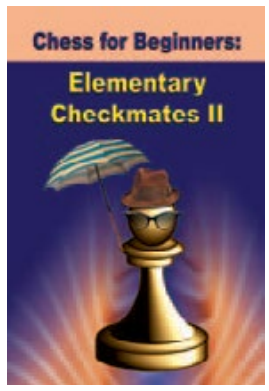

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On every move Magnus looked at ways of bringing it into play, and I at possibilities of preventing this. During the game I considered only three possibilities for White, in one way or another involving the activation of the knight, and they would all have lost:

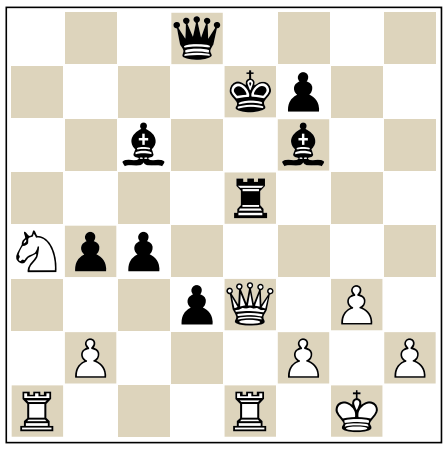
A) the move in the game;

B) 35.♘c5 ♗c6, and White loses everything;

C) 35.f4 ♖e6 36.♕c5+ ♖d6 37.♕xc4 ♗d4+ 38.♔f1 ♕d7 39.♘c5 ♕g4! 40.♖a7+ ♔d8 41.♘e6+ ♕xe6 42.♕c7+ ♔e8, and the black bishops control the entire board.

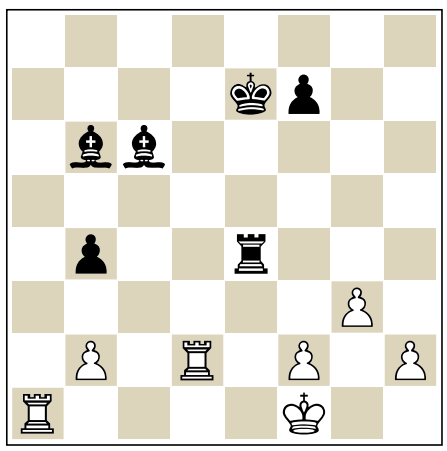
The computer is completely unconcerned about its knight on the edge of the board, and it points out the only move which might yet have held the position – 35.♖e1! with the idea after 35...d2 of bringing the rook back: 36.♖ed1. There is no logic to this, but Black has no direct win, for example: 36...♗c2 37.♕xd2 ♗xd1 38.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 39.♖xd1+ ♔c7 with a probable draw.

Apparently the strongest is 35...♗c6!. Now White has to find a series of only moves:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

36.♕c5+! (this square, since he loses after 36.♕a7+? ♔f8 37.♖xe5 ♗xe5 38.♕c5+ ♕d6 39.♕xc4 d2 40.♕c2 ♗f3 41.♖d1 ♗xd1 42.♕xd1 b3!) 36...♕d6 37.♕xc4 d2 38.♖ed1 ♖e4 (38...♗b7 39.♘b6!; 38...♗xa4 39.♖xa4 ♖e1+ 40.♔g2 ♖xd1 41.♖a7+ ♔d8 42.♖a8+ with perpetual check) 39.♕c5! (39.♘b6? ♖xc4 40.♘c8+ ♔f8 41.♘xd6 ♖c2) 39...♖e2 (it is possible to play for domination by 39...♖d4 40.♕xd6+ ♔xd6 41.f4 ♔d5, which appeals to me), and White is practically forced to give up a piece: 40.♔f1 ♕xc5 41.♘xc5 ♗b5 42.♔g2 ♗d4 43.♘e4 ♗c6 44.♔f1 ♖xe4 45.♖xd2 ♗b6



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

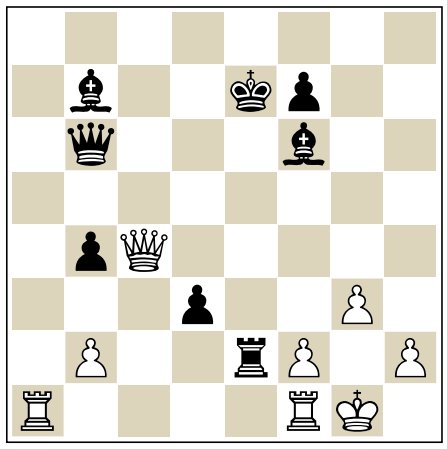
leading to an endgame which is very similar to my endgame with Ivanchuk in the following round. Black is certainly playing for a win, but I am not sure that he will be able to achieve it.

35...♗b7 Defending against the check on a7. **36.♕f4**

36.♖a7 ♖xe3 37.♖xb7+ ♔e8 38.fxe3 c3, and the black pawns cannot be stopped.

36...♕xb6 A sad life, an inglorious end, as they say...

37.♕xc4 ♖e2 38.♖f1



And without waiting for the obvious 38...♗d4, Magnus resigned.

A memorable game on a grand scale, as regards both the intensity of the struggle, and the content of the play.

NOTES BY

Vishy Anand

RG 6.12 – C42

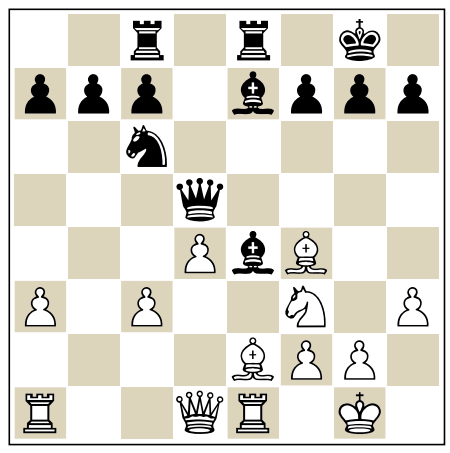
Vishy Anand

Vladimir Kramnik

Wijk aan Zee 2010 (12)

At this stage Kramnik and Carlsen were leading the tournament with +4 and I was still on +1. But at least I had a good idea in the Petroff that I wanted to try out.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♘c6 7.0-0 ♗e7 8.c4 ♘b4 9.♗e2 0-0 10.♘c3 ♗f5 11.a3 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♘c6 13.♖e1 ♖e8 14.cxd5 ♕xd5 15.♗f4 ♖ac8 16.h3 ♗e4



So far no big deal. Kramnik had reached the very same position several times, and just the previous day against Shirov a very important battle had developed after 17.♘d2. But I didn't want to repeat Shirov's idea because I assumed Kramnik would have worked on that. I tried to find something unusual and stumbled on 17.♕c1.

17.♕c1

In fact, I had beaten Kramnik once with 16.♕c1 instead of 16.h3, so this was the second time I placed the queen on that square in this line.

Both these moves I had analysed back in 2005 with my second Ubilava, but there was quite a bit of fine-tuning to do before I could make it work again.

17...♘a5

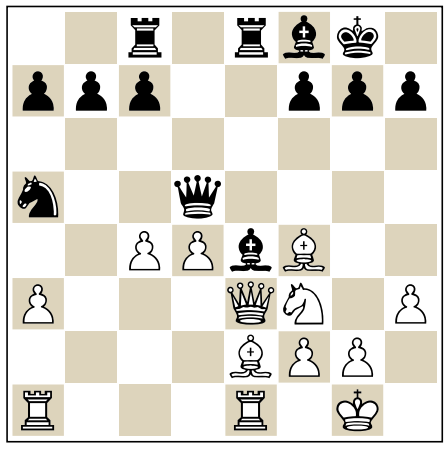
Of course there are several possibilities for Black: 17...♗f6, 17...♗d6 and probably quite some others as well, but it is interesting that Kramnik started to think quite a bit here, so I had the feeling that I had caught him at least somewhat by surprise.

18.♕e3 ♗f8

After thinking for quite some time Vladimir realized that he had just forgotten his preparation, so instead of wading into some sharp line he went for the most passive set-up, which is to pull the bishop back and give me my space, and settle for something solid.

Other moves were 18...♗d6 and 18...♗f5.

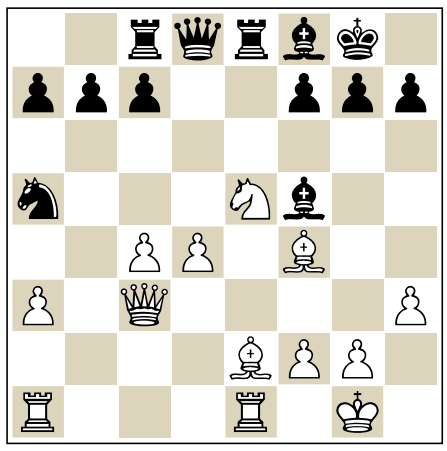
19.c4



19...♕d8

The queen has to withdraw, as 19...♘xc4 fails to 20.♗xc4 ♕xc4 21.♘d2, and Black loses a piece.

20.♘e5 ♗f5 21.♕c3



21...b6

The problem with 21...c5 22.d5 is that White has a passed pawn which can always go to d6, so Black tries to protect the knight without

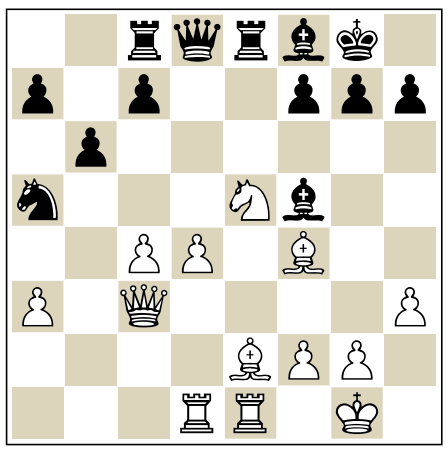
NEW IN CHESS

Vladimir Kramnik doesn't know yet that Vishy Anand is going to spoil his tournament, too.

conceding that, and it seems that I should have taken this chance to play c5, now or on the next move.

22.♖ad1

I had overestimated the possibility of Black being able to put the bishop on d5, but it seems that he is not really able to do anything with it, and if we reach the position after 22.c5! ♗e6 23.♗a6 ♖a8 24.♗b5 ♖e7 25.♖ad1 ♗d5 26.♗d3, White will threaten 27.♖e3, with a fairly safe advantage.

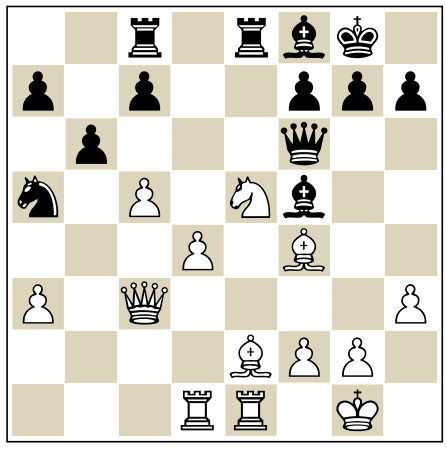


22...♕f6

Black should have used his chance to play 22...f6! and then try and swap the bishops with ...♗d6. I would probably have gone back: 23.♘d3 (if I return by playing 23.♘g4 the position is equal after 23...♗d6 24.♗xd6 cxd6 25.♘e3 ♗e6), and White keeps some advantage.

23.♕g3

For the second time I miss the chance to play 23.c5!. I was a bit reluctant to mix it up, but it seems that the space gained and the fact that White takes away certain key squares like d6 and also allows the bishop on e2 to go to b5 or maybe a6, gives White quite an edge.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

For example 23...♗e6 (23...♗xh3 runs into 24.♕g3! – clearly

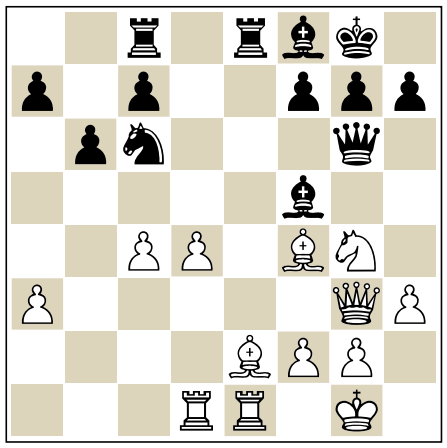
stronger than 24.♕xh3 ♕xf4 25.♗d3 g6 26.♖e4 – 24...♗f5 25.♗g5 ♕e6 26.♗h5 g6 – relatively better is 26...♗g6 27.♗g4 ♕d5 28.♗xc8 ♖xc8 29.♘xg6, although Black should be lost here as well – 27.d5, and the queen is lost) 24.♕g3.

23...♘c6

We had both assumed that White was better here after the game continued with 24.♘g4. But it turns out that Black has a pretty surprising resource on move 26, so perhaps the position is fine for Black and White has missed his chance to get an advantage by playing c5 on either of the previous moves.

23...c5 24.d5 ♗d6 25.♗h5 g6 26.♖e3 ♗xe5 27.♗xe5 ♖xe5 28.♖xe5 ♘xc4 would probably be a pretty good exchange sacrifice if White withdraws the rook and the black knight gets to d6, but unfortunately White has a tactic: 29.♖xf5! ♕xf5 30.♗g4 ♕c2 31.d6, and the passed pawn costs material.

24.♘g4 ♕g6



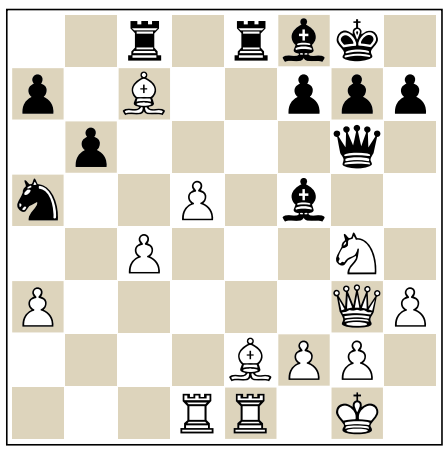
25.d5

In view of the possibility that Black missed on move 26, it seems that I should have taken the pawn on c7 here: 25.♗xc7. For example: 25...♖e4 (less good is 25...♗c2 26.♖d2 ♘a5 27.c5! ♘b3 28.♖xc2 ♕xc2 29.♘h6+ – also good is 29.♘f6+ ♔h8 30.♘xe8 ♖xe8 31.♗e5 – 29...♔h8 30.♘xf7+ ♔g8 31.♘h6+ ♔h8 32.♗e5 ♘xd4 33.♘f7+ ♔g8 34.♗xd4 ♖xe2 35.♖xe2 ♕d1+ 36.♔h2 ♕xd4 37.♘g5 bxc5 38.♕f3, with a white advantage) 26.d5 (26.♗f3 ♖xe1+ 27.♖xe1 h5 gives Black counterplay) 26...♘d4 27.♗f1 ♗xg4 28.♖xe4 ♕xe4 29.hxg4 ♘e2+ 30.♗xe2 ♕xe2 31.♖f1 ♖e8 32.♕f3 ♕xc4 33.d6 ♕b5 34.♖d1, with a white edge.

25...♘a5

Here, 25...♗c2 26.♖d2 ♘a5 gives White good compensation for the exchange after 27.♖xc2 ♕xc2 28.♘h6+ ♔h8 29.♘xf7+ ♔g8 30.♘e5.

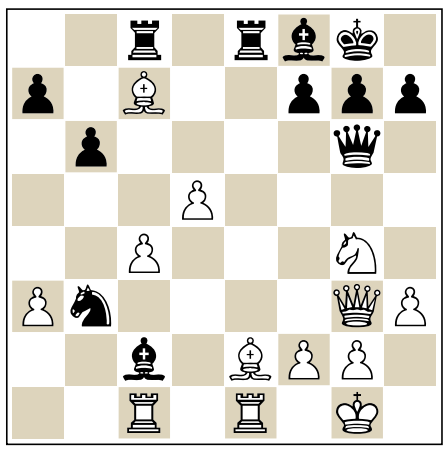
26.♗xc7



26...♗c2?

We were both engrossed looking for forcing ways for Black to do something specific, like this move followed by 27...♘b3, but instead the computer points out the calm 26...♗c5!, when it seems that after the queen swap and the black bishop's retreat to d7 – 27.♗f1 h5 28.♖xe8+ (28.♘e3 ♕xg3 29.♗xg3 ♗d7) 28...♖xe8 29.♘e3 ♕xg3 30.♗xg3 ♗d7 – Black has full compensation. With his weaknesses on the queenside it is very difficult for White to take advantage of his extra pawn.

27.♖c1 ♘b3



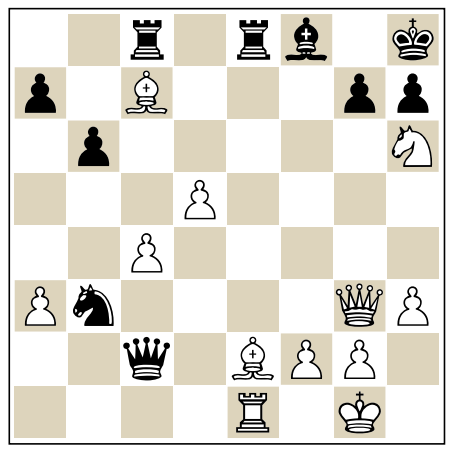
28.♖xc2!

A nice exchange sacrifice, but in fact White's play has been leading up to this, and the next few moves are fairly logical.

28...♕xc2 29.♘h6+ ♔h8 30.♘xf7+ ♔g8 31.♘h6+ ♔h8 32.♘f7+ ♔g8 33.♘h6+

A little confusion here. A lot of people, and briefly my opponent as well, thought I was repeating moves, but in fact the first time, if you notice, I took a pawn on f7 and the second time I went to an empty square, so it's not a repetition yet. I was simply trying to get a bit closer to the time-control in case the position got out of hand. But I had the feeling that I was better, so I intended to continue.

33...♔h8



34.♗e5!

And in fact White is simply much better here. The problem for Black is that his king is really weak. The light squares, potentially a bishop going to e6 or h5, there are just so many weaknesses around the king. Plus, the pawn on d5 is badly restricting his rook.

34...♕g6 34...♕d2 loses to 35.♘f7+ ♔g8 36.♗c3! ♕c2 37.♘d6.

35.♗g4

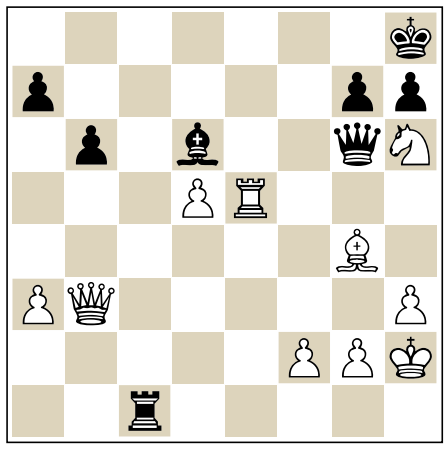
It's better to keep the queens on, as the win after 35.♕xg6 hxg6 36.d6 ♖xe5 37.♘f7+ ♔g8 38.♘xe5 ♗xd6 39.♘xg6 would take more time.

35...♖xc4

After the alternative 35...♖cd8 either 36.♘f5 or 36.♕xb3 ♕xh6 – 36...♗d6 37.♗e6 – 37.♗e6 would

keep two pawns and a massive advantage. But after the text-move there's a forced win.

36.♕xb3 ♖xe5 37.♖xe5 ♖c1+ 38.♔h2 ♗d6

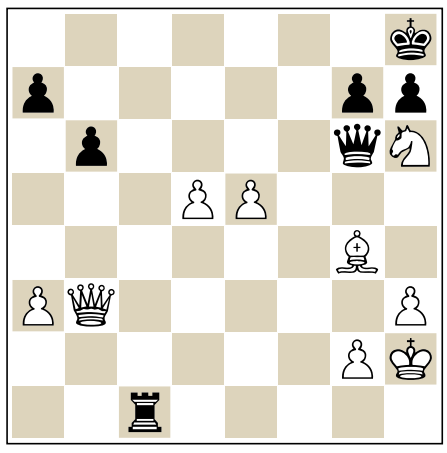


39.f4

This move doesn't spoil anything, it simply requires a little bit more calculation.

After 39.♕e3 the game would be basically over, because 39...♕xh6 is met by 40.f4, and otherwise Black can't do very much.

39...♗xe5 40.fxe5

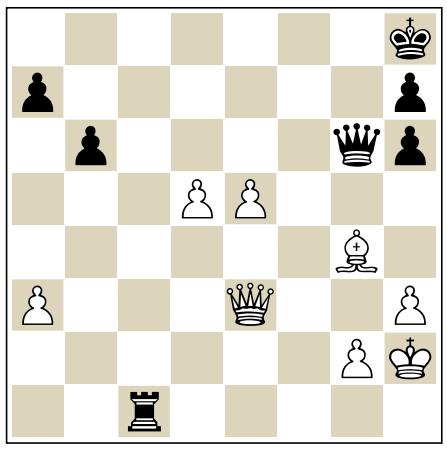


40...gxh6

The trickiest line would have been 40...♕e4, but the queen sacrifice idea 41.d6 ♕f4+ 42.♕g3 ♖h1+ 43.♔xh1 ♕xg3 44.♘f7+ is not that difficult to find once you work out that the knight of f7 takes away a lot of key checking squares such as e5 and d6: 44...♔g8 45.e6 (also winning, but more cumbersome, is 45.d7 ♕e1+ 46.♔h2 ♔xf7 47.d8♕ ♕xe5+ 48.g3 ♕b2+ 49.♔g1 ♕xa3 50.♕d5+) 45...♕e1+ 46.♔h2 ♕c1 47.d7 ♕f4+ 48.♔g1 ♕c1+ 49.♔f2 ♕d2+ 50.♗e2 ♕f4+ 51.♗f3 ♕d4+ 52.♔g3, and wins.

41.♕e3

This is a good precaution to stop ...♕g5 or any checks coming via f4 or e5, of course, and in fact the rest of the game is fairly simple.



41...♕b1 42.d6 ♖h1+ 43.♔g3 ♖e1 44.♕f4 ♖f1 45.♗f3

Black resigned.

NOTES BY

Fabiano Caruana

RL 12.3 – C77

Magnus Carlsen

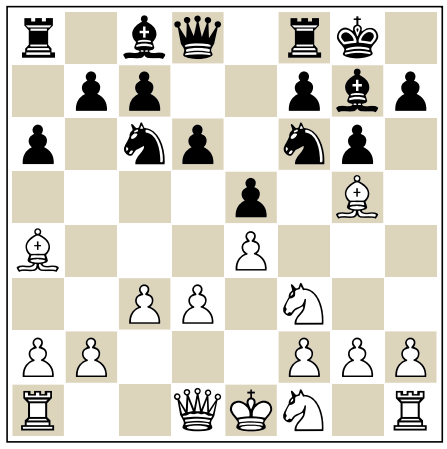
Fabiano Caruana

Wijk aan Zee 2010 (13)

This was one of the critical games of the last round. Magnus Carlsen had 8 points from 12 games, half a point ahead of his nearest rivals Kramnik and Shirov. If he were to beat me, he would claim clear first place.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.d3 d6 6.c3 g6 7.♘bd2 ♗g7 8.♘f1 0-0 9.♗g5

I knew very little about this variation, so it was at this point that I started thinking on my own.



9...d5!? An enterprising and risky move, which, however, has no clear refutation.

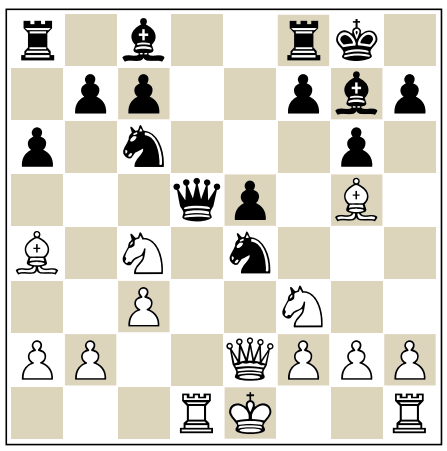
10.♕e2

NEW IN CHESS

Other moves also lead to a roughly equal game: 10.exd5 ♕xd5 11.♘e3 ♕d6 (11...♕c5 12.0-0 ♗e6 13.♘d2!, and Black has problems coordinating) 12.0-0 (12.♘c4 ♕d5 13.♗xc6?! bxc6 is positionally dubious for White) 12...b5 13.♗b3 ♗e6, with an equal game.
10.♘e3 dxe4 11.♗xf6 ♕xf6 12.dxe4 ♘e7 is also fine for Black.

10...♕d6 11.♗xf6

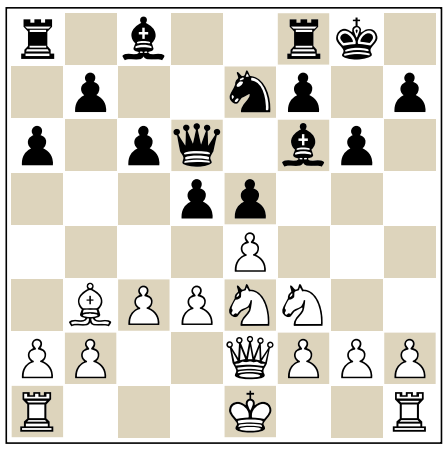
This surprised me. I hadn't expected him to give up the bishop pair without a fight.
I had expected 11.♘e3!?, with the tactical point of 11...dxe4 (I was instead planning 11...b5) 12.dxe4 ♘xe4 13.♘c4 ♕d5 14.♖d1, but here I missed the spectacular blow



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

14...♘d4!! 15.cxd4 ♘xg5 16.♘xg5 ♕xg2, and Black wins!

11...♗xf6 12.♘e3 ♘e7 13.♗b3 c6



14.h4!?

A move which threw me off balance. I didn't realize he could play this way! Soon, I started to feel uncomfortable, because I couldn't see how to counter his attack.

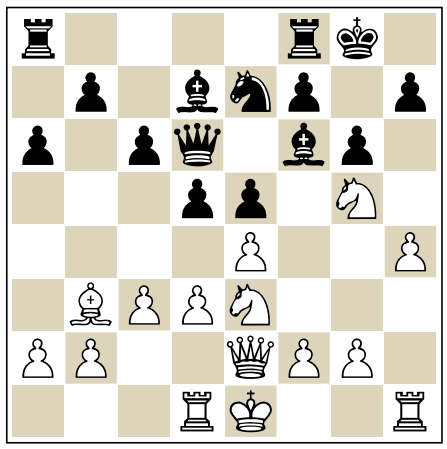
14...♗e6 15.♘g5

TORSTEN BEHL

Fabiano Caruana came close to spoiling Magnus Carlsen's tournament: 'Bad luck! This move leads to a draw.'

15.h5 a5 leads to good play for Black.

15...♗d7 16.♖d1 A useful move. In many lines White will have tactical opportunities because of the queen's vulnerability on d6.
Black has no problems at all after 16.exd5 cxd5 17.♕f3 (17.♘xd5? loses to 17...♗xg5) 17...♗c6.



16...♖ad8!! This deep move was the most difficult one of the game. I hold up my shaky rear by tactical measures!
My first intention was 16...b5?, but then I noticed the refutation: 17.exd5 cxd5 18.♕f3 ♗c6 19.♘e4! dxe4 20.dxe4, with a very strong initiative for White.

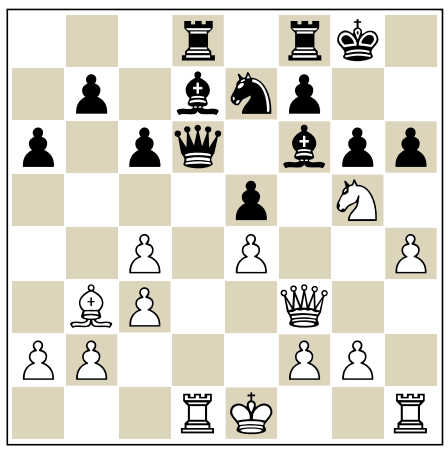
Of course it was possible to play 16...h6, but then after 17.♘f3, the threat of h5 becomes more unpleasant, as the g6 pawn has been weakened.

17.♕f3?

An error based on miscalculation. 17.exd5 cxd5 18.♕f3 ♗c8! was the main point of 16...♖ad8.
I suggest 17.♘f3!?, with h4-h5 to come, as White's best chance, although Black is obviously not worse.

17...h6 18.♘c4 dxc4 19.dxc4

Seemingly attractive, but...



19...♘d5!

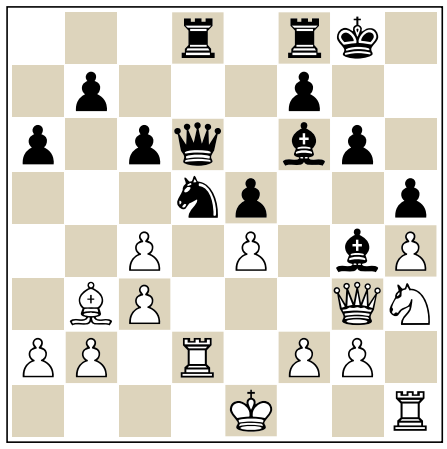
This interposition turns the tables!

20.♘h3

A sad move to have to make, but the alternatives would have lost: 20.exd5? hxg5 21.c5 e4, or 20.cxd5? hxg5 21.dxc6 ♕xc6. In both cases White has no compensation for the lost piece.

20.c5 ♕e7 21.exd5 cxd5 is also winning for Black.

20...h5 21.♕g3 ♗g4 22.♖d2

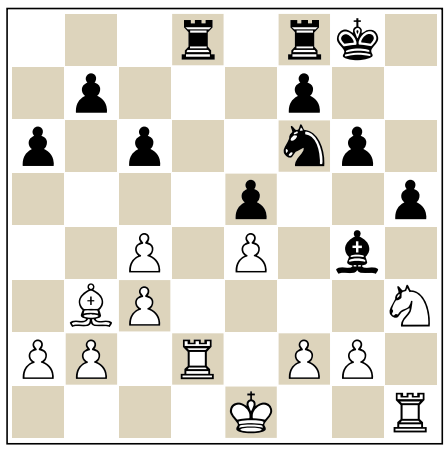


22...♗xh4

Also possible was 22...♕e7 23.cxd5 ♗xh4 24.♕d3 ♔g7, when Black plans ...f5. Due to White's offside knight Black has a serious advantage.

23.♕xh4 ♕f6 23...♘f4? is very nice, but fails to 24.♕xd8! ♕xd8 25.♖xd8 ♖xd8 26.♘xf4 exf4 27.f3 ♗e6 28.c5, with an equal endgame.

24.♕xf6 ♘xf6

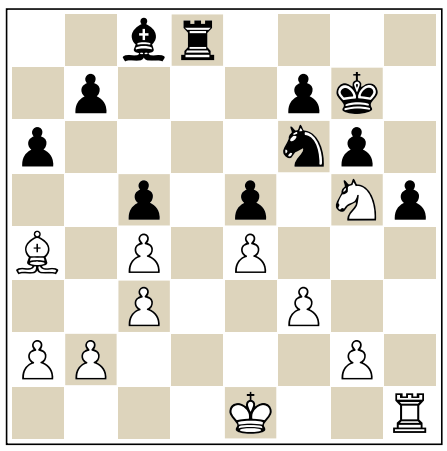


This is a very unpleasant endgame for White.

25.♘g5 c5 26.f3 ♗c8 27.♗a4 ♔g7 28.♖xd8

I expected 28.g3 ♖xd2 29.♔xd2 ♔h6 30.f4, and here I had planned 30...♗e6!, when it is very awkward to defend the c4 pawn.

28...♖xd8



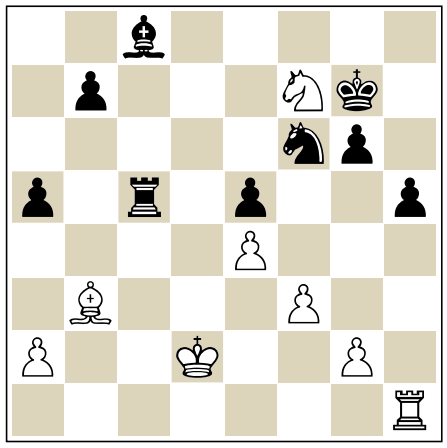
29.b4!?

A move few people would have the strength to make. Objectively it is a mistake, but it offers practical chances, as I was in time-trouble.

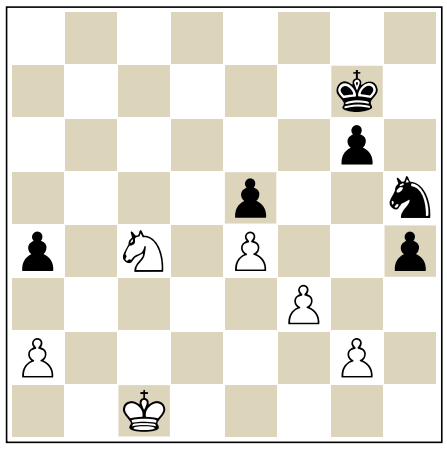
29...♖d3 30.bxc5 ♖xc3?!

Unnecessarily complicating matters. Correct was 30...♘d7! 31.c6 (31.♗xd7 ♗xd7 is hopeless for White) 31...♘c5 32.cxb7 ♗xb7, and White is being dominated.

31.♔d2 ♖xc4 32.♗b3 ♖xc5 33.♘xf7 a5



34.♖c1! Although the ensuing knight endgame looks lost, this was still White's only chance to resist. **34...♖xc1 35.♔xc1 a4 36.♗c4 b5 37.♘d6 bxc4 38.♘xc8 h4 39.♘b6 ♘h5 40.♘xc4**

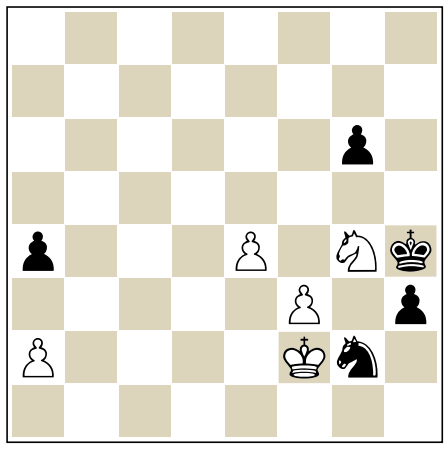


40...♔f6?

Bad luck! This only leads to a draw, whereas 40...♘f4 would win! But it's difficult to decide with only two minutes on your clock for the last move of the time-control.

So I should have played 40...♘f4!! 41.♘xe5 ♘xg2 (I don't see any way for Black to win after 41...♔f6 42.♘g4+ ♔g5 43.♘f2! ♘xg2 44.♘h3+ ♔h5 45.♔d2 g5 46.♔e2 g4 47.fxg4+ ♔xg4 48.♘f2+ ♔f4 49.♘d3+ ♔xe4 50.♘c5+, with a draw), and now:

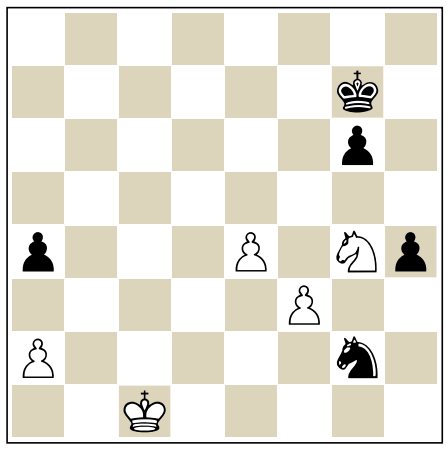
A) 42.♔d2 ♔f6 43.♘g4+ ♔g5 44.♔e2 h3 45.♔f2 ♔h4.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

This position is winning for Black. Due to zugzwang White will be forced to allow Black's king into g3: 46.e5 ♘f4 47.a3 g5 48.♔e3 ♔g3 49.♔e4 ♘e6 50.♘e3 ♘g7! – an impressive manoeuvre, preparing ...h2 – 51.♘g4 h2 52.♘xh2 ♔xh2 53.f4 g4 54.f5 g3 55.f6 g2 56.f7 ♘e6, and Black queens first;

B) 42.♘g4



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

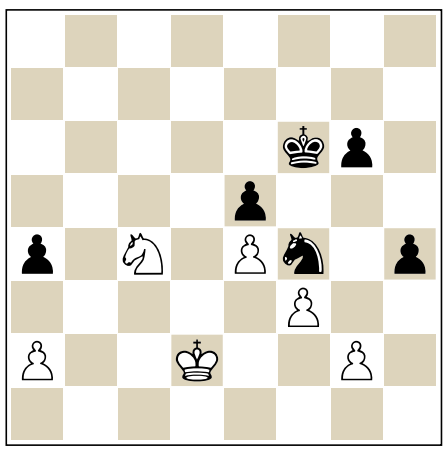
42...♘e1! (an important move,

Wijk aan Zee 2010 — **cat. XIX**

					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		TPR
1	Magnus Carlsen	IGM	NOR	2810	*	0	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	8½	2822
2	Vladimir Kramnik	IGM	RUS	2788	1	*	½	0	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	8	2801
3	Alexey Shirov	IGM	ESP	2723	½	½	*	0	0	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	8	2806
4	Vishy Anand	IGM	IND	2790	½	1	1	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	7½	2770
5	Hikaru Nakamura	IGM	USA	2708	½	0	1	½	*	0	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	7½	2777
6	Sergey Karjakin	IGM	UKR	2720	0	½	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	7	2748
7	Vasily Ivanchuk	IGM	UKR	2749	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	7	2746
8	Peter Leko	IGM	HUN	2739	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	0	½	1	6½	2717
9	Leinier Dominguez	IGM	CUB	2712	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	6½	2719
10	Fabiano Caruana	IGM	ITA	2675	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	1	0	5½	2665
11	Nigel Short	IGM	ENG	2696	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	*	0	½	½	5	2634
12	Loek van Wely	IGM	NED	2641	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	1	½	½	1	*	1	0	5	2638
13	Sergey Tiviakov	IGM	NED	2662	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	0	½	0	*	1	4½	2613
14	Jan Smeets	IGM	NED	2657	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	½	1	½	1	0	*	4½	2614

allowing the king to advance to the centre) 43.♘h2 ♔f6 44.♔d2 ♘g2 45.♔e2 ♔e5 46.♔f2 ♘f4 47.♔e3 g5 (this position is losing for White due to the weakness of White's a-pawn) 48.♘g4+ ♔d6 49.♔d4 ♘e2+ 50.♔e3 ♘c3 51.a3 ♘b1 52.f4 gxf4+ 53.♔xf4 ♘xa3 54.♘e3 h3 55.♔g3 ♔e5 56.♔xh3 ♔xe4 57.♘d1 ♘b1, and the a-pawn is unstoppable.

41.♔d2 ♘f4

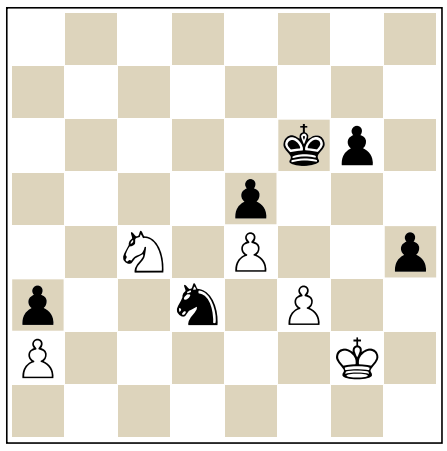


42.♔e3

Obviously not 42.♘e3? ♔g5 43.♔e1 ♘xg2+ 44.♘xg2 h3 45.♔f2 h2, and the black pawn queens.

42...♘xg2+ 43.♔f2 ♘f4 44.♘b2 a3 44...♔g5 45.a3! is also drawn: 45...♔h5 (or 45...h3 46.♔g3 with a draw) 46.♘xa4 ♘d3+ 47.♔g2 ♘e1+ 48.♔f2 ♘c2 49.♘c5 ♘xa3 50.♘d3 ♘c4 51.♔g2 g5 52.♔h3 ♔g6 53.♔g4 ♘e3+ 54.♔h3 ♔f6 55.♘c5 ♔e7 56.♘d3 ♔d6 57.♔h2, and Black cannot make any progress: 57...♘c2 58.♔h3 ♘d4 59.♔g4 ♘e6 60.♘f2 ♔c5 61.♔f5, with a draw.

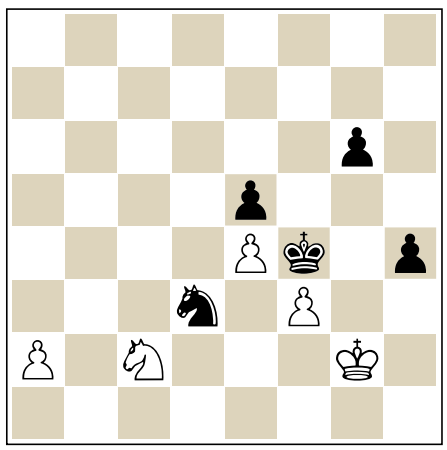
45.♘c4 ♘d3+ 46.♔g2



46...♔g5

46...♘b4 47.♘xa3 ♘xa2 48.♘c4 is similar to 44...♔g5. This 3 vs 2 pawns endgame is always drawn. 46...♘e1+ 47.♔f2 ♘c2 48.♔g2 g5 49.♔h3 ♘e1 50.♔g4 ♘d3 51.♔h3. Again, Black will have to trade the a-pawns, with a draw.

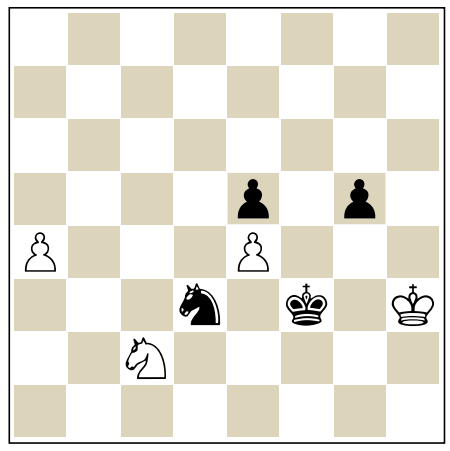
47.♘xa3 ♔f4 48.♘c2



At this point I realized how White would draw after 48...g5.

48...♘b2

If 48...g5 then 49.a4 h3+ 50.♔xh3 ♔xf3



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

51.♔h2! (this is the move I had overlooked in my previous analysis. When White's king reaches g1, it will be impossible to create threats with the g-pawn) 51...g4 (51...♔f2 52.♔h3 is a repetition; 51...♘f4 52.♔g1 ♘e2+ 53.♔f1 ♘g3+ 54.♔g1 ♘xe4 55.a5, with a draw) 52.♔g1 ♔xe4 53.a5, and, as usual, White's a-pawn is too far advanced for Black to have any winning chances.

49.♘b4 h3+ 50.♔xh3 ♔xf3 51.♔h4 ♔f4 52.♘d5+ ♔xe4 53.♘e7 Eliminating the g-pawn. The draw becomes obvious.

53...♔f3 54.♘xg6 e4 55.♘e5+ ♔f4 56.♘g4 ♘a4

Draw.

Anish Giri

Another Great Leap Forward

In hindsight his original ambition was laughably modest. Seeded 12th (from 14), **Anish Giri** (rated 2588 at that point) had hoped that he wouldn't lose too many games and avoid last place in the category 16 Corus B-Group. Following an explosive start with wins over third and second seeds Pentala Harikrishna and Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu, he understood that he might strive for considerably more. In a fairy-tale scenario Giri continued to dominate the field and scoring four more wins (against one loss and six draws) he finished half a point ahead of top-seed Arkady Naiditsch to claim the finest victory in his young and prodigious career. In the process the winner added 33 points to his rating.

One of the special attractions of playing in the B-Group Giri found that he could watch the stars from the top group in action from up close. Next year it will get even better when he will be sitting opposite them. In a highly personal account the 15-year-old Dutch champion tells his 'own story' of one of the most sensational wins in recent chess history.

Two years ago, when I was eliminated as early as the first round of the ICC qualifier to Corus C, I could hardly have imagined that two years later I would win the B-group of the prestigious Corus tournament.

Following my debut in the C-group last year (when I shared second place with Tiger Hillarp Persson, one point behind Wesley So), it was a great pleasure for me to get invited to Wijk aan Zee again. And it was an even greater pleasure to have a chance to play, this time, in the very strong B-tournament.

Furthermore, I was also very happy with the strong A-group, since in Corus I am not only a player but also a spectator, who

Daily ritual, good old tradition. Minutes before the round is to start, Anish Giri and his friend Robin van Kampen have a bowl of pea soup.

can enjoy the exciting games from the A-group and see all the top players 'in real life' ☺.

It was the most important and strongest tournament that I had ever played so far, and obviously I took it very seriously. I prepared very well and I think I was in pretty good shape.

However, I also think I was lucky with my pairings, not only because I had seven whites and six blacks, but also because I had white against everyone against whom I wanted to have white, and black against those I didn't mind playing as Black against.

So (one has to be careful with using the word 'So' when talking about this year's Corus B ☺) my first game was against Harikrishna, and since I had white, I was pretty optimistic.

SL 4.3 – D17
Anish Giri
Pentala Harikrishna
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (1)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 dxc4 5.a4 ♗f5 6.♘e5 e6 7.f3 ♗b4

I had more or less expected this line during my preparation, and I decided to check my opponent's knowledge in a sideline.

8.♘xc4

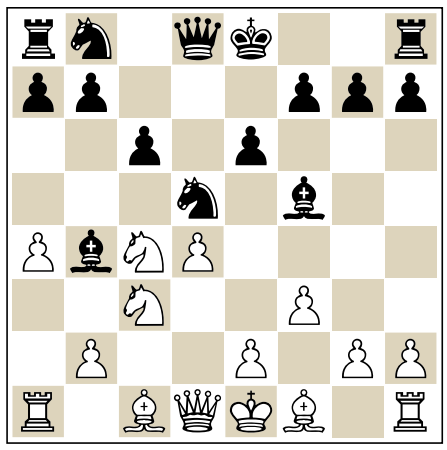
Here 8.e4 is the main move, and now, after the forced 8...♗xe4 9.fxe4 ♘xe4 10.♗d2 ♕xd4 11.♘xe4 ♕xe4+ 12.♕e2 ♗xd2+ 13.♔xd2 ♕d5+ 14.♔c2 ♘a6 15.♘xc4, White has a piece for three pawns, and the position is unclear. When seeing the position for the first time one may think that this position is completely random, but in fact it has been played more than 350 times by players like Kasparov, Kramnik, Anand and so on. Some have even played the position with both sides. The text-move took Harikrishna by surprise and after some thought he went for...

8...♘d5

I was very surprised that he played this move, since I remembered that when I checked some statistics of this line, 8...0-0 was the main move, with 8...c5 as the second choice, but with a big gap in-between. The move he played was the third option...

NEW IN CHESS

Indians in Wijk aan Zee: Abhijeet Gupta, Pentala Harikrishna and Parimarjan Negi. Rumour has it that next year the festival will be called Tata Chess Tournament after the Indian owner of the Corus steel works.



9.♗d2

After he played 8...♘d5 I realized that it was a trap, since after 9.♗d2 he can pick my d4 pawn. Then of course I realized that it was extremely dangerous to grab the pawn. However, I hesitated for a long time because of another option: 9.♕d2.

With 9.♕d2 I don't give a pawn, and after 9...♘b6 (I totally missed 9...c5, but here White is slightly better, too, after 10.e4 cxd4 11.♕xd4 ♘xc3 12.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 13.exf5 – or 13.♗d2) 10.e4 ♘xc4 11.♗xc4 ♗g6 12.0-0 I am slightly better, I thought. But then all of a sudden some very brave thoughts came into my head and I just played 9.♗d2.

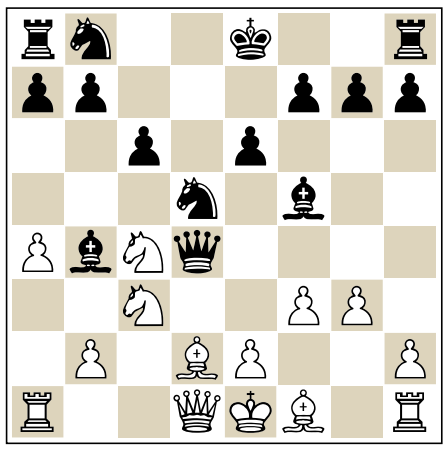
9...♕h4+?

I had mixed feelings after he executed this move. I was happy that he had accepted the challenge, but I also was a bit unsure about all those complications.

9...♘b6 was best, and I don't even think that the bishop is better on d2 than the queen. But I just wanted to provoke Hari into grabbing the pawn and then punish him for it. I knew it was tricky, since I know that Harikrishna himself is a tricky guy ☺.

10.g3 ♕xd4

Here, I had originally planned 11.e3.



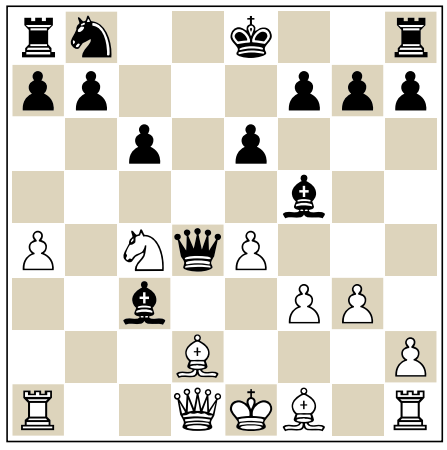
11.e4

But then suddenly I noticed this move and... I realized that it may be just winning by force! I started calculating, rechecking my calculation five times. After the fifth time I thought that it was accurate enough, so I went for it!

By the way, 11.e4 is a strong novelty, which finishes off the line with ...♕h4+ completely. I was very happy that even my computer didn't see that move at once.

As said, I had initially planned 11.e3, when after 11...♕f6 12.e4 ♘xc3 13.bxc3 ♗xc3 14.♖c1 ♗xd2+ 15.♕xd2 ♗g6 16.♘d6+ I was calculating like crazy trying to be sure that I was better. It is of course clear that I am much better, but sitting there in my first game with really a lot of pressure (exerted by myself ☺) I was not that sure.

11...♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♗xc3

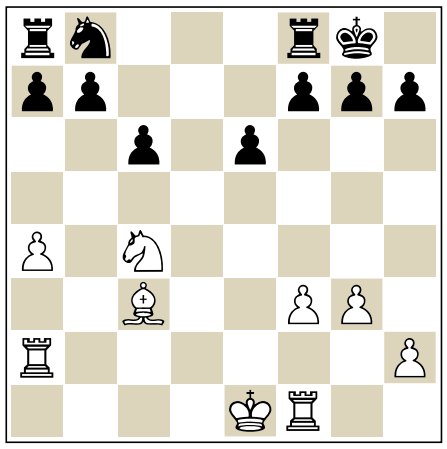


13.♖a2!! The point! I was very happy when after the game no one less a person than Peter Leko told me that he liked this idea!

13...♗xe4 13...♗h3 was what Harikrishna had been counting on. He had missed 14.♕b3!. As I said, I rechecked 11.e4 five times, so luckily I had noticed the beautiful 13...♗h3 too.

14.♕c1 Now I thought that I had already won the game, but I forgot that he can give up the piece and fight on... I was a bit upset of course, but nonetheless after

14...♗d3 15.♕xc3 ♕xc3 16.♗xc3 ♗xf1 17.♖xf1 0-0

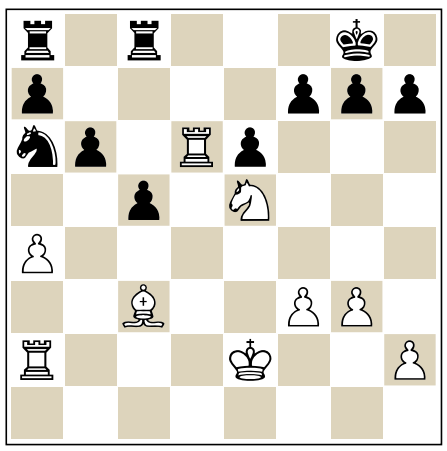


I think I played perfectly, without giving him any chance.

18.♔e2 b6

To somehow develop, since I was threatening ♘a5.

19.♖d1 ♘a6 20.♖d6 ♖fc8 21.♘e5 c5



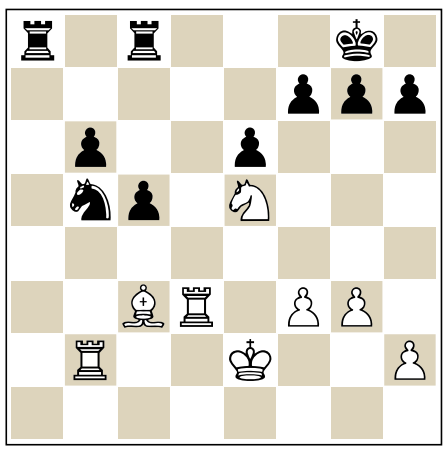
22.a5!

I was very happy that I had continued to calculate this move, since after the seemingly very strong

22...♘c7

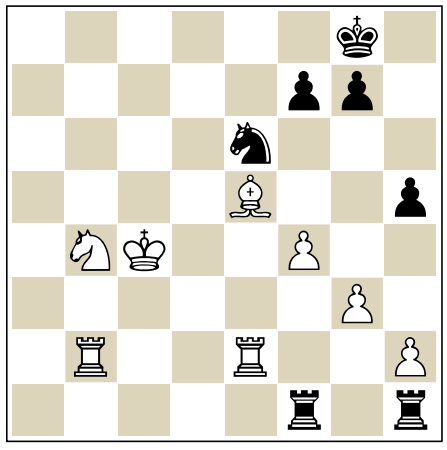
I win a pawn by force with

23.axb6 ♘b5 24.♖d3 axb6 25.♖b2!



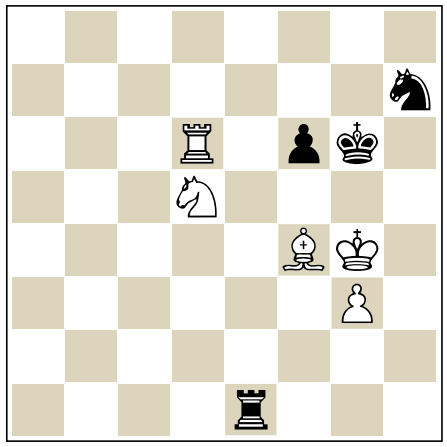
Now the b6 pawn falls and he has no chances. The rest I played very accurately too.

25...♘c7 26.♘c4! ♖e8 27.♘xb6 ♖a6 28.♔d2 e5 29.♘d5 ♘e6 30.♗xe5 c4 31.♘b4! ♖a1 32.♖e3 ♖d8+ 33.♔c2 ♖h1 34.♖e2 ♖dd1 35.♔c3 ♖df1 36.f4 h5 37.♔xc4



Suddenly I took all his pawns, and with a full extra piece in the endgame I am not afraid of anyone, not even of strong players like Harikrishna!

37...h4 38.♘d5 ♖c1+ 39.♖bc2 hxg3 40.hxg3 ♖xc2+ 41.♖xc2 f6 42.f5 ♘f8 43.♗f4 g6 44.fxg6 ♔g7 45.♖a2 ♔xg6 46.♖a6 ♘h7 47.♔d3 ♖e1 48.♘e3 ♘f8 49.♔e4 ♘d7 50.♖d6 ♘f8 51.♔f3 ♖b1 52.♔g4 ♖e1 53.♘d5 ♘h7



54.♗g5!

I felt that I needed some killer move to force him to resign ☺.

54...♖e5 55.♘f4+

Black resigned.

I was very pleased with my play in this game! Afterwards I felt that I was in the best possible shape and I was very optimistic about the rest of the tournament! This is why I think this game was very important for my tournament as a whole.

Of course I knew that there were still twelve difficult games awaiting me. The next one was against Nisipeanu. It was one of my best games in the tournament, and I felt flattered when at the final press conference Magnus, the winner of the A-group, said that he liked the game!

RG 3.2 – C42
Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu
Anish Giri
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (2)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6

I decided that against a creative and sharp player as Nisipeanu, the Petroff would be a good choice, and as it turned out, I was right!

3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.c4

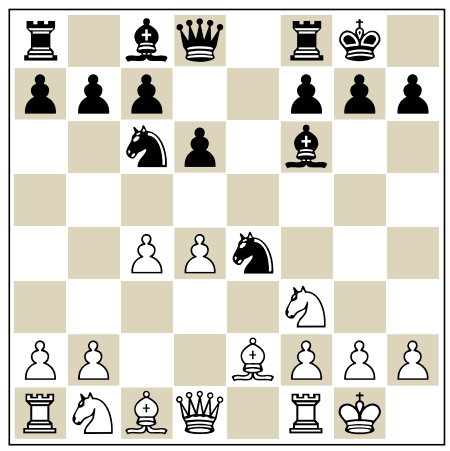
A rare line that Nisipeanu had already played a couple of times.

5...♘c6 6.♗e2

This came as a surprise. Before, he used to play 6.♘c3, which is really-really harmless. So in fact it wasn't such a big surprise that he deviated.

6...♗e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.d4 ♗f6

8...d5 was my first thought, but after 9.cxd5 ♕xd5 10.♘c3 ♘xc3 11.bxc3 ♗f5 we get one of the main lines of the Petroff, but with a pawn on a2 instead of a3! I think this leads to an advantage for White, since now ♕b3 is possible, but more importantly the ...♘a5/...♕b3 idea is less appealing.



9.d5 This move came as a pleasant surprise to me! I realized that all I had to do was to make a cou-

ple of reasonable moves and offer a draw ☺. In fact, after this move I get a slightly better (easier to play) position. After the game Nisipeanu said that he was trying to fight for an advantage by any means, so this was his try. His move is rather an understandable mistake, since his advantage is simply nowhere to be found.

Better was 9.♗d3 ♗f5 10.♖e1 ♖e8, and now 11.g4 was the only thing that bothered me, but already before I played 8...♗f6, I had found 11...♘xf2! 12.♔xf2 ♗xg4, and Black has a killing attack! Unfortunately, 11.g4 is also bad because of the simple 11...♗g6 12.g5, and now 12...♕d7!!. Nevertheless I was very happy that I had found ...♘xf2!. Now that 11.g4 doesn't work, White has no advantage after 8...♗f6.

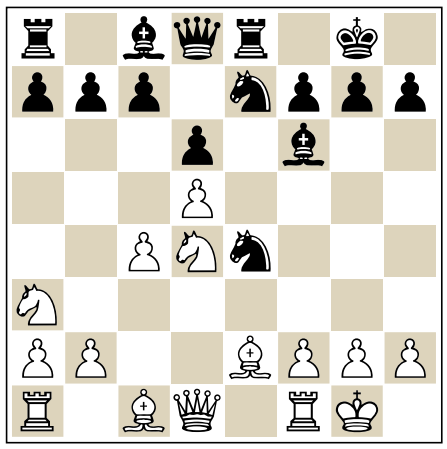
9...♘e7 9...♘e5 was my first thought, but I rejected it, first of all because I liked 9...♘e7 more, but also because I was a bit worried by some ideas like 10.♘xe5 ♗xe5 11.f4 ♗f6 12.♗f3 (12.g4!?) 12...♖e8 13.g4, and although it is clear to me now that Black is better, over the board I was not so sure.

Anyway, 9...♘e7 retained more tension, and I think it was better.

10.♘d4 ♖e8!

I was somehow feeling very good after I made this move. My first ideas were 10...♘g6 and 10...♘f5, but then I asked myself, what will White do if I just make a move? And I received no answer ☺.

11.♘a3



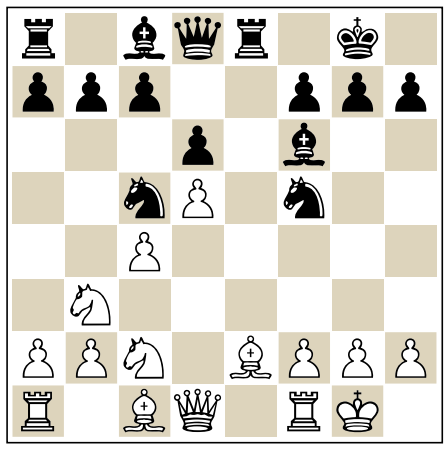
11...♘f5

11...c6! crossed my mind. It's strong, but I thought that once he consolidates with ♘ac2 I am the only one that can get worse. The computer proves that Black's dynamic play is worth more than the slightly weakened structure: 12.dxc6 bxc6 13.♖b1! (13.♘ac2 ♕b6! 14.♖b1?? ♘c3!), and now Black has a lot of possibilities, for example: 13...♕b6 14.♗e3 c5 15.♘db5 ♘f5, and here I finally see why my smart engine liked ...c6 so much. Well, I am only human, what can I say...

12.♘ac2 ♘c5

This move I liked, too. My position felt really good, even though my advantage is minimal. I don't even regret that I didn't play ...c6 a move earlier!

13.♘b3



13...♗d7

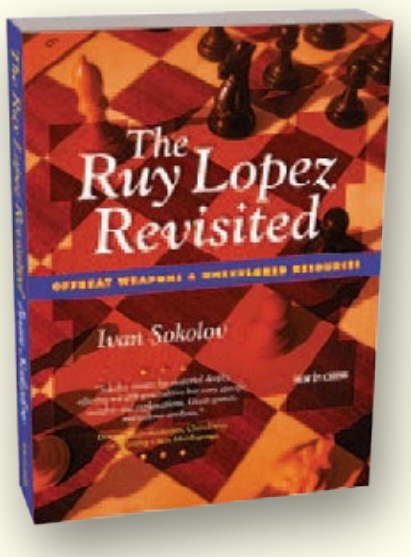
13...b6!? would be very clever in order to capture on c5 with the b-pawn and to have the b-file open. I don't know, though, if it is worth more than the d6-square for my knight!

14.♘xc5 dxc5 15.♗d3 a5 16.♖b1 h6 17.♗d2

Here he offered a draw. I was about to agree... but then I thought: 1. It is too early and 2. What is his next move?

17...b6

My last three moves were 'just moves' and I think that it was



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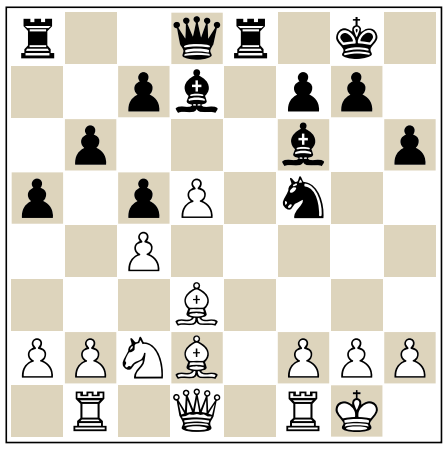
very important that he runs out of those easy logical moves like ♖b1 and ♗d2 before I run out of them. Now he had to take time (which he already didn't have too much of) and make some decisions.



18.♕f3

This move I had missed, and now I had a choice to make a draw with 18...♘h4 or to continue, although I felt that my initiative was disappearing.

18...♘d6

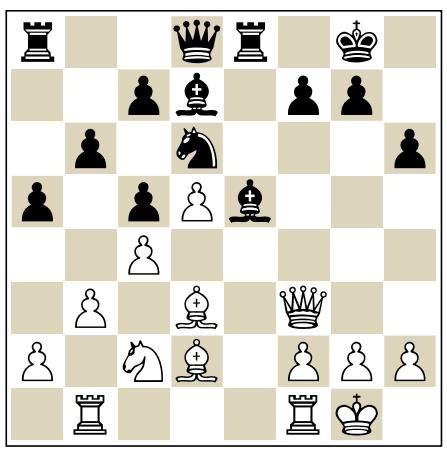
I forced myself to play this move, because somewhere deep inside I just wanted to make a draw and be happy with my 1½/2 start against such strong players. But then I realized that my position was still more pleasant to play, I had more time and that 2/2 is better than 1½/2!

18...♘h4 19.♕g3 ♘f5 was the draw that I was considering.

19.b3

19.♗f4 prevents ...♗e5, but now I have 19...♗g5 20.♗xg5 ♕xg5, and I am ever so slightly better.

19...♗e5



20.h3

This was a mistake. I even think that this move weakens his position.

20.♖fe1 would keep it almost equal, since now after 20...f5 he has 21.♗f4, but still, after 21...♕f6 22.♗xe5 ♖xe5 23.♖xe5 ♕xe5 24.♖e1 ♕f6 I am slightly better.

20...f5

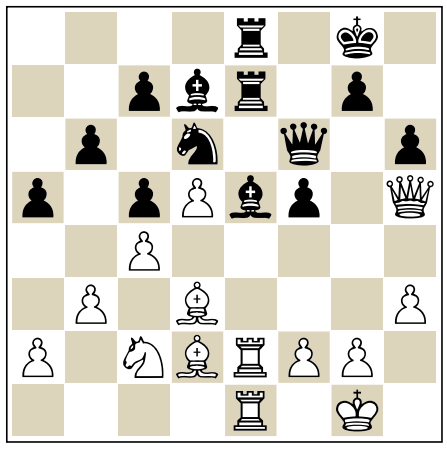
Now I was already seriously thinking about winning the game!

21.♖fe1 ♕f6

At this point Nisipeanu was already in real time-trouble, whereas I had a lot of time and a very pleasant position. The computer, however, tries to convince me that it is equal. This time there is no way I will believe it!

22.♖e2 ♖e7 23.♖be1 ♖ae8 24.♕h5

A mistake, but it is hard to suggest something for him, since even though I am only slightly better, I have a lot of plans to improve my position (...♘f7, ...♗d6 or ...g5) whereas he has none.



24...g6!

He's lost two tempi. I can imagine how unpleasant this is with only minutes left for 15 moves.

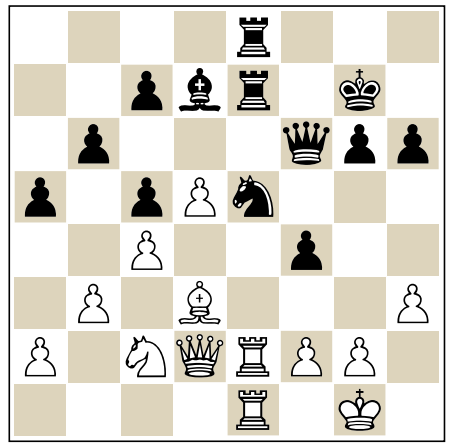
The computer screams that 24...♘e4! would have given me an advantage. I wasn't even considering it!

25.♕f3 ♘f7 26.♗f4 ♔g7

No rush!

27.♕g3 ♗xf4 28.♕xf4 ♘e5! 29.♕d2 f4!

Now it is practically over, although he still has a saving move.



30.♗e4?

The final blunder. 30.f3 was the only move, when 30...♗xh3 31.♖xe5 ♖xe5 32.♖xe5 ♖xe5 33.gxh3 is better for Black, but I would prefer 30...h5, and then some slow plan with ...g5-g4 and maybe ...♘f7-d6.

30...♗xh3! 31.♕c3 ♗g4

White resigned. This game felt extremely easy, and that boosted my confidence even further.

I think it is worth mentioning that my second game was very important for my psychological preparation ☺: before this game my kind room-mate, Robin van Kampen (another 15 year-old Dutch player who, by the way, finished shared third in the C group), was always questioning my 'great' fighting spirit, constantly reminding me that I play the Petroff. Well, after this game I finally had an answer! ☺ By the way, I had a very nice time with Robin, with a lot of fun! Luckily enough there wasn't a single day on which we both lost our game. I can't imagine how quiet our room would have been in that case ☺.

The third game was against Dimitri Reinderman. At that point he had 0 out of 2, while I had 2 out of 2. This, however, didn't affect our game. In fact, he made a very easy draw with black. In the opening he played the Stonewall, and I followed a good plan, but then at some point I lost the thread and he managed to equalize

easily. I wasn't all that upset after the game, since I know that Dimitri is, in fact, a quite strong player and the fact that he had 0/2 was no more than bad luck.

My fourth game was another draw, this time, however, against my fellow-leader, Ni Hua. I decided to go for the Petroff again, and thanks to my preparation I got an extra hour. I possibly should have used some part of this hour to equalize accurately, but I made some small mistakes and then only a very narrow tricky defence helped me to equalize the game. In fact, after the game the computer showed me that my defence would not have been enough if he had played a few accurate moves, but we didn't even find this during our post-mortem, so I was pretty satisfied with this game as well.

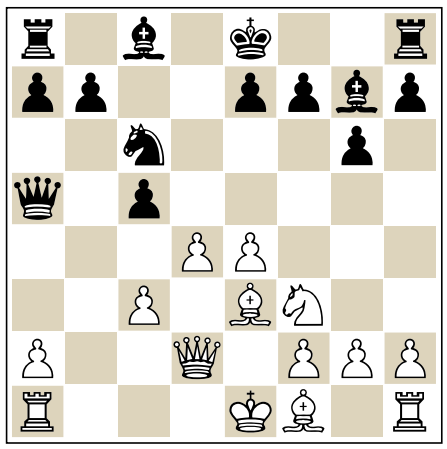
After that game we had a dinner with the managers of Corus. I liked this event very much, not only because of the delicious food and nice conversations, but also because I liked the speeches of the Corus representative and of the Chess representative – Vishy Anand!

Well, back to my tournament. After a well-spent rest day, when it was mostly my computer that worked hard, I had to play against Emil Sutovsky.

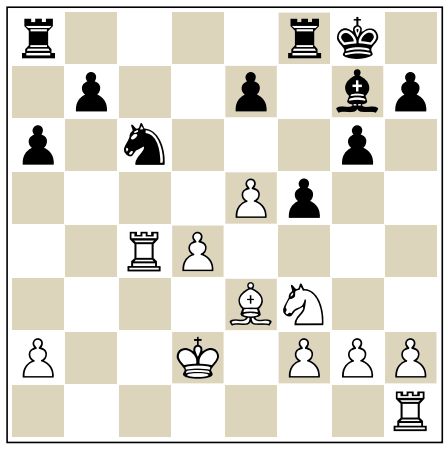
GI 4.9 – D85
Anish Giri
Emil Sutovsky
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (5)

This was my second game against Emil. In our first game in Zurich last year, I played a very good game, got a winning position with black, but then I got too nervous and sacrificed my queen when it was not needed. In the end the game was drawn, even though after my queen sacrifice I was nearly lost. So this time I wanted to get back the half-point that I lost in that game!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5
Emil plays the Grünfeld almost exclusively, so obviously I was prepared for this. The fact that we had had a rest-day before this game was also to my advantage.
4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e4 ♘xc3 6.bxc3 ♗g7 7.♘f3 c5 8.♗e3 ♕a5 9.♕d2 ♘c6



10.♖b1 A clever move. White tries to provoke ...a6.
10.♖c1 cxd4 11.cxd4 ♕xd2+ 12.♔xd2 is another main position.
10...a6 11.♖c1 Now the rook goes to c1 after all, but the b6-square is weak, which will be especially important in the endgame.
11...cxd4
I didn't expect this variation from Emil, because I thought that his strong point was complicated play, and those passive endgames were not his style.
12.cxd4 ♕xd2+ 13.♔xd2 f5
Here 13...0-0 would not be good, because of 14.d5, when 14...♖d8 would be met by 15.♗b6.
14.e5 ♗e6 15.♗c4 ♗xc4 16.♖xc4 0-0



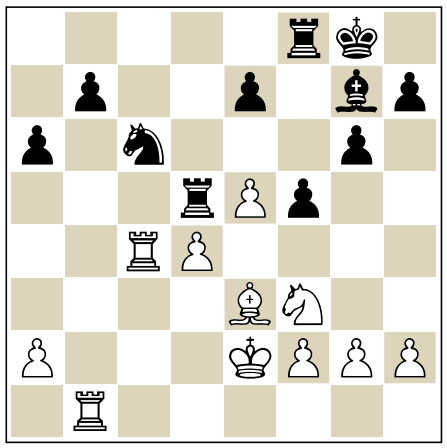
Of course, I was well prepared for this position, but over the board I got worried about ...♖ad8-d5, so I tried to find the most precise way to fight against it.

NEW IN CHESS

Against Israeli GM Emil Sutovsky, Anish Giri had his revenge for the game he failed to win in Zurich last year.

17.♔e2 ♖ad8 18.♖b1 ♖d5

And he went for it! The normal plan for Black is ...e6, ...♖d7, ...♖e8, ...h6 and to wait and see. This, however, is not Emil's style.



19.a4

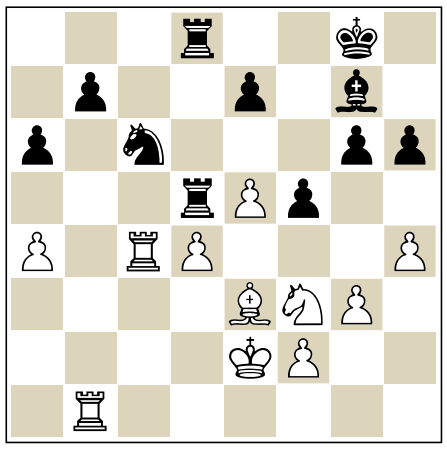
19.♖xb7 ♘a5 is the point.

19.♖c2 was interesting, but I wanted to get some minimum safe advantage, without any calculation. After 19.♖c2 I would have to calculate both 19...f4 and 19...♖b5, but in fact White is better after both.

19.♖c5 ♖xc5 20.dxc5 ♖b8! 21.e6 ♘d8! was what I was considering for a long time.

19...♖fd8 20.g3 h6 21.h4!

Just restricting his options.



21...♘a5 And here I again felt that my opponent was not in the mood to just remain passive.

21...♖8d7 was the normal move, when after 22.♖b6 White has an advantage, since after 22...e6 I will just take on c6, while after 22...♔f7 I have got some options to transfer my knight, e.g. ♘d2-b3 or ♘e1-c2(d3), since d4 is poisoned.

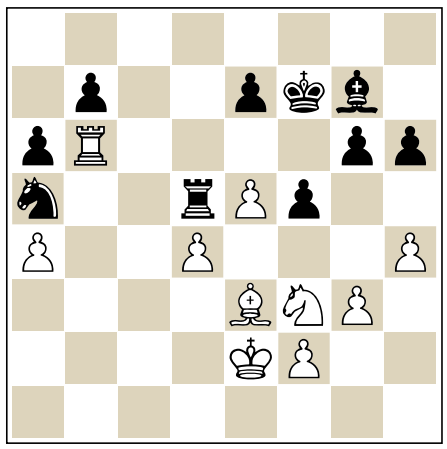
22.♖c7! ♖5d7

After the more normal 22...♖8d7 I had planned 23.♖c2, to prevent 23...b5, since 23...b5 fails to 24.♖c8+ ♔f7 25.♖a8!.

23.♖c5! ♖d5

Now, with some clever but simple rook moves, I have won an important tempo.

24.♖xd5 ♖xd5 25.♖b6 ♔f7



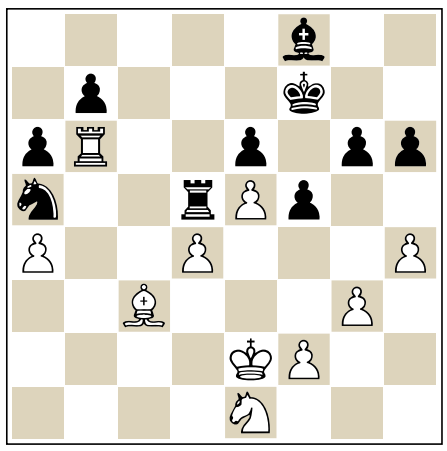
26.♗d2

26.♔d3! was another idea I looked at, but I didn't like it because of 26...♖d8. What I failed to see was 27.h5! g5 28.♗xg5!, and White wins.

26...♗f8

26...♘c6 was, of course, the only move: 27.♗c3 ♘d8, and now both ♘d2-b3(c4) and ♘e1-c2(d3) give White a large advantage, although Black is still hanging on.

27.♗c3 e6 28.♘e1!

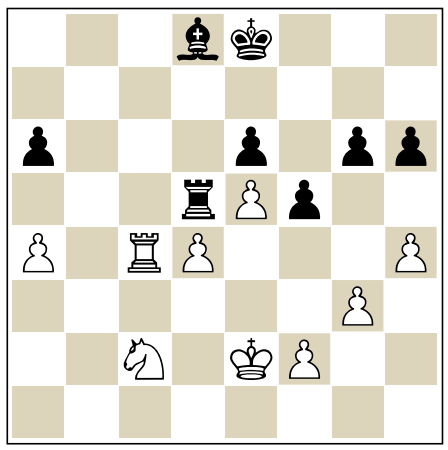


I was very happy with my knight manoeuvre!

28...♗e7 29.♘c2 ♗d8 30.♗xa5! ♖xa5 31.♖xb7+

Now 31...♗e7 loses to ♘b4-c6, which may be what Emil had missed from a distance.

31...♔e8 32.♖b4 ♖d5 33.♖c4



He is not only a pawn down, but also going to lose a second one almost by force.

33...♖d7 34.♖c6 ♔f7 35.♖xa6 ♖b7 36.a5 ♖b2 37.♔d3 ♖a2 38.♖a7+

Black resigned.

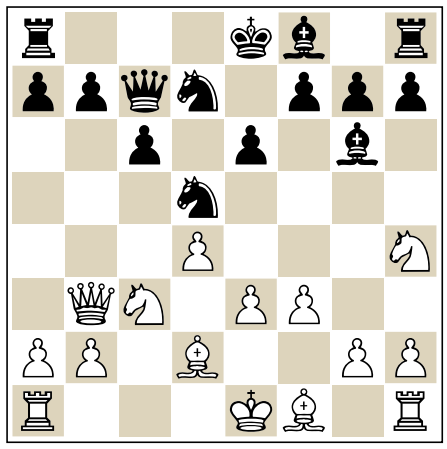
After this pretty easy game I was already on a 4/5 score. Robin also won his game (it was the first game that he won) and we both were extremely satisfied that day!

As I was already feeling I was winning the tournament, I very much wanted to win my next game too, even though I was facing a strong and solid player, Tomi Nybäck, with black. My desire to fight affected the opening very much (not in a good way) and it was only my optimism and confidence in myself plus a positional blunder by Tomi that helped me to win the game.

SL 1.7 – D12
Tomi Nybäck
Anish Giri
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (6)

As I already said, I wanted to increase my lead and I felt that I could win this game too. This time it worked, but next time I will be more careful.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 ♗f5 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘h4 ♗e4 7.f3 ♗g6 8.♕b3 ♕c7 9.♗d2 ♘bd7 10.cxd5 ♘xd5



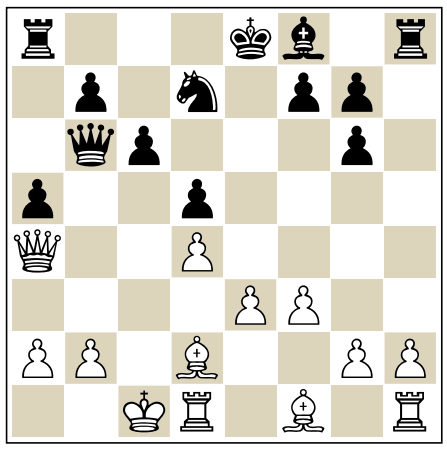
11.♘xd5!? exd5 12.♘xg6!? hxg6 13.0-0-0

With his last two moves, which almost never occur in practice, Tomi at once killed all my possible counterplay with ...c5, and now all my dreams of winning the game vanished. I had to fight for equality and wait and see if he wanted to break through with e4 or to push g4-g5.

13...♕b6!?

But as said, I was not in a mood to fight for equality at all, and after wasting some 40 minutes I made a couple of active moves, only to realize that I had a strategically lost position as early as move 15. 13...0-0-0 14.h3 ♔b8 15.g4 is what the position was demanding. White is slightly better and Black has no active plan. But objectively speaking Black is very solid, and the game should be close to equal.

14.♕a4 a5



15.e4

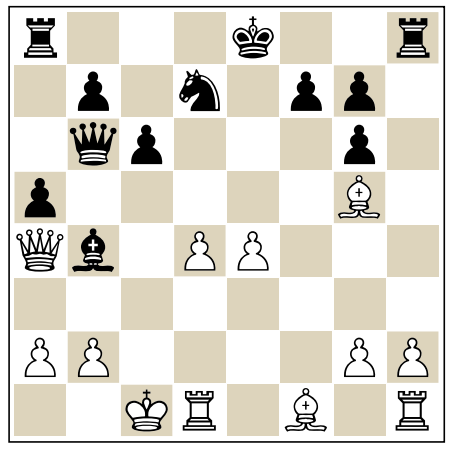
Instead, 15.♔b1!?, as suggested by Jan Smeets after the game, was even more unpleasant at first sight, but after 15...♗b4 16.♗c1!, Black has the interesting resource 16...♘f6 17.h4 ♔f8!, and he will survive, although White is much better. The point is that after 17...0-0 White would just mate Black with g4, h5, etc.

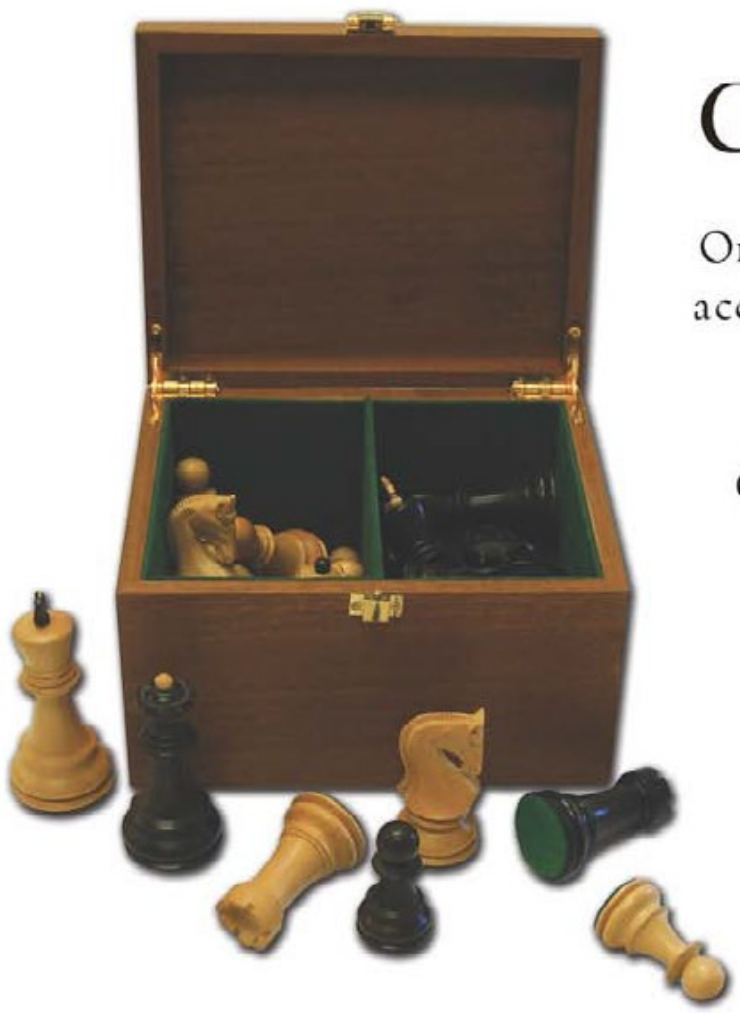
15...dxe4 16.fxe4 ♗b4

This was my idea, and I was very optimistic until he replied...

17.♗g5!

Now I realized that I was strategically lost.





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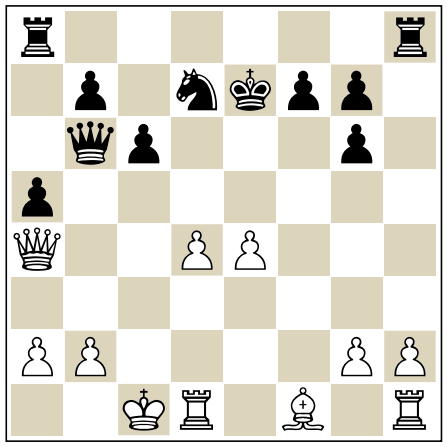
17...♗e7!?

I knew that something very tricky must be tried in order not to lose without a fight.

17...♘c5 18.♕c2 ♘e6 looks attractive, but after 19.♗e3 Black is completely hopeless. White will just go ♗c4/♔b1, with a close to winning advantage.

18.♗xe7 ♔xe7



NEW IN CHESS

With a smile of relief Anish Giri shows his game against Tomi Nybäck to the press. Remaining optimistic, he turned a strategically lost position into a winning attack.

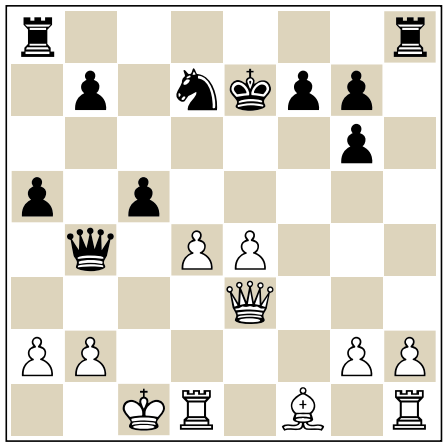
19.♕a3+!?

An interesting switch. 19.♗c4 ♕b4 20.♕c2 ♘b6 21.♗e2 was simple and good.

19...♕b4 20.♕e3 c5!?

I decided that I had to play in this sharp manner since, with my king on e7, I would be in big trouble otherwise. Plus, this move sets a very nice positional trap...

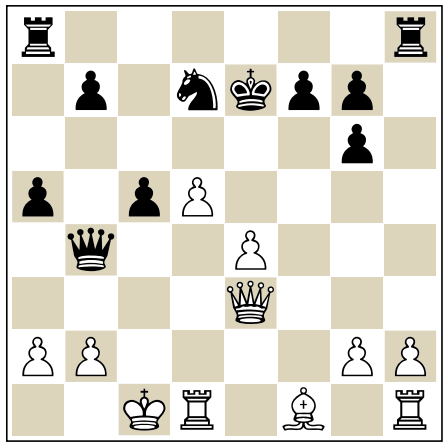
Simply 20...♔f8 is quite possible, though. White is better, but at least I take my king to safety.



21.d5??

A horrible positional blunder! Now everything is turned upside down, and it is Black who is strategically winning!

21.♔b1! would be very strong, when I would have had to find the only move 21...♔f8!, and it is not so easy for White to find something concrete. However, some slow play like h3/a3/♗c4 should give him a stable plus. In fact, in our post-mortem we missed 21...♔f8, thinking that Black would be lost after ♔b1. Now I can conclude that 17...♗e7 and 20...c5 were actually not only good moves from a practical point of view, but also objectively.



21...♔d6!!

I was very proud to execute this move. Now I block both the d5 and the e4 pawn, and I can start pushing my own pawns on the queenside. Tomi had completely missed this move, and since it is the only way to stop d6, it is logical that he made the terrible move 21.d5.

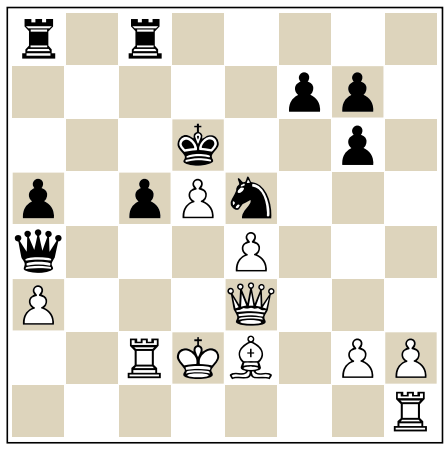
22.a3 ♕a4!

If 22...♕b6 then 23.a4!.

23.♖d3 b5 24.♖c3 ♖hc8 25.♗e2 ♘e5 26.♔d2!?

Nybäck tries to flee with his king, but it doesn't really work.

26...b4 27.♖c2 bxa3 28.bxa3



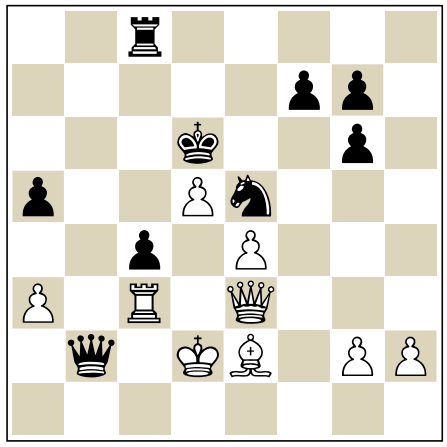
28...♖ab8

28...♕d4+!? was strong, but I didn't like the idea of going into the endgame, since he was in time-trouble and I wanted to mate him.

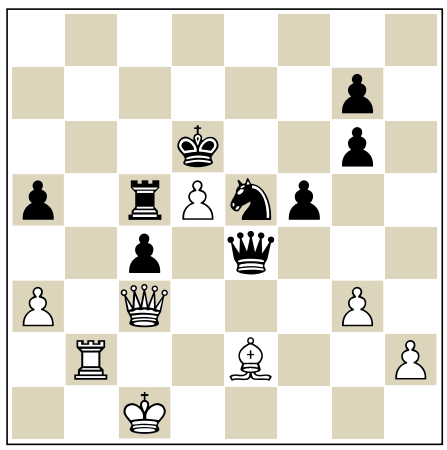
29.♖hc1 c4 30.♖c3 ♖b2+ 31.♖1c2

31.♔e1! was necessary, when after 31...♕b5 32.♔f1 Black is clearly

better, but White is still holding.
31...♕b5 32.♖xb2 ♕xb2+



33.♖c2!? Setting a trap...
33... ♕b1 33...c3+ 34.♕xc3! was the trap, but I had seen it already before he played 33.♖c2.
34.♕c3 Bad, but nothing is good anymore.
34...♖c5 Now the c2 rook is bound to its square, since otherwise e4 is hanging.
35.g3 f5! 36.♖b2 ♕xe4 37.♔c1



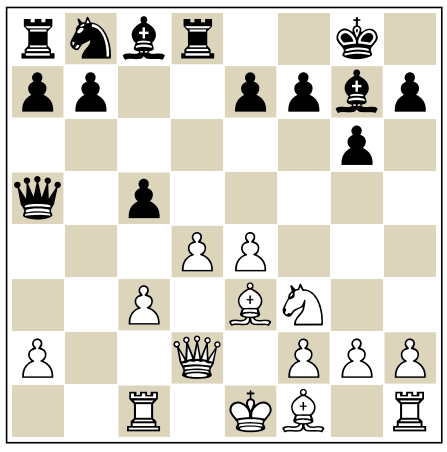
37...♘d3+! White resigned.
So, even though I won mainly because of his blunder, I liked this game very much, especially because of my 21...♔d6!.

The next two games I had white, so I was full of optimism as usual. But, in fact, in my next game against L'Ami, I was pretty much outplayed in a Catalan endgame and I had to fight for a draw. Luckily enough I made it, even though I was disgusted with my position throughout the game. But well, one cannot be much upset with 5½/7, and since I was also having white against Howell, I had every reason to be optimistic. Moreover, my family members came to visit me after my game against Erwin, so I was full of fighting spirit again!

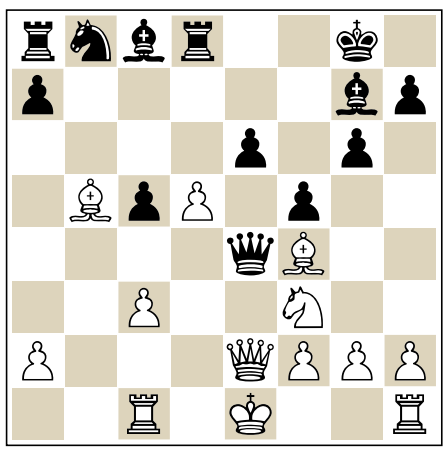
The game against David was pretty important and I won it almost disturbingly easily.

GI 4.8 – D85
Anish Giri
David Howell
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (8)

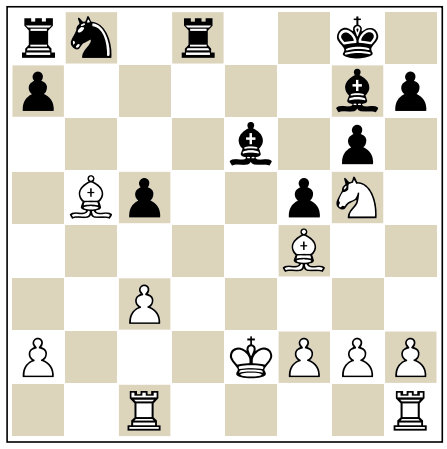
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5
Again the Grünfeld, and again I was quite well prepared.
4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e4 ♘xc3 6.bxc3 ♗g7 7.♘f3 c5 8.♗e3 ♕a5 9.♕d2 0-0 10.♖c1 ♖d8



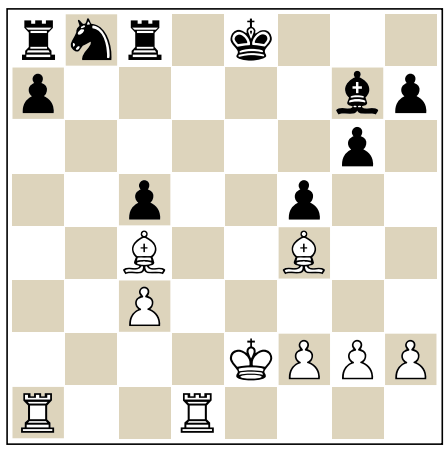
In this game Howell, compared to Sutovsky, went for a sharp line, but in the coming five moves something went totally wrong, and after
11.d5 e6 12.♗g5 f6 13.♗f4 f5 14.♗c4 ♕a4 15.♕e2 b5 16.♗xb5 ♕xe4
the only thing I had to do was to deviate from a game that we both knew with



17.dxe6! That game between Moiseenko and Petrosian in Ohrid 2009 went 17.♕xe4 fxe4 18.dxe6 ♗xe6 19.♘d2 a6 20.♗a4 ♘d7 21.0-0 ♘f6 and ended in a draw on the 67th move.
17...♗xe6 If 17...♕xf4 18.0-0!, and White is winning.
18.♘g5! ♕xe2+ 19.♔xe2



Till move 17 we both blitzed out our moves, but here my opponent spent a full hour. It was already too late, since he is totally lost by now.
19...♗xa2 20.♖a1 ♗f7 21.♖hd1 ♖c8 22.♘xf7 ♔xf7 23.♗c4+ ♔e8



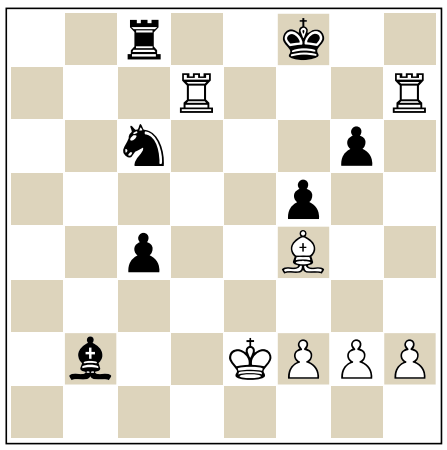
24.♗e6
24.♖d6! would have won even more quickly, but I had already seen the coming line during his hour of thinking, so I went 24.♗e6 as planned.
24...♘c6 25.♖a6! ♘e7 26.♗d7+ ♔f8 27.♗xc8 ♖xc8 28.♖xa7 ♗xc3
Now it's a matter of technique, and I decided to take the h-pawn instead of the c-pawn to be sure that he got no chances.

NEW IN CHESS

Anna Muzychuk may have been the bottom seed, but she didn't fail to strike when Anish Giri went wrong at a crucial juncture.

29.♗g5 ♘c6 30.♖xh7 ♗e5 31.♖dd7 c4 32.♗f4! ♗b2

Here I took some time to calculate things through till the end...



33.♖c7 ♘d4+ 34.♔d2 ♖xc7 35.♖xc7 c3+ 36.♔d3 ♘e6 37.♗d6+ ♔g8 38.♖c8+ ♔f7 39.♗e5 ♗a3 40.♔xc3

Black resigned.

A surprisingly easy game. Now I was 1½ points ahead of my pursuers, and my next game was against the lowest seed...

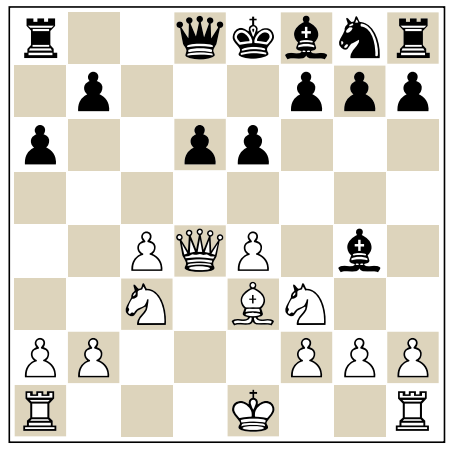
So, what else did I want? A 1½ point lead, the next game against the lowest seed in the tournament and a rest day! But like so often, when you expect yourself to win, things go wrong, whereas when you don't expect anything you suddenly win game after game.

Against Anna Muzychuk I decided not to repeat the Petroff, and I had some interesting idea. However, I quickly mixed things up, and ended up in a slightly worse endgame. Then I found a precise way to equalize, but when I had to concentrate and make an important decision I relaxed and ended up being totally lost.

SI 1.4 – B51
Anna Muzychuk
Anish Giri
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (9)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗b5+ ♘d7 4.d4 cxd4 5.♕xd4 a6 6.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 7.c4 ♗g4!? A new idea. Just to kick the bishop out and then develop normally.

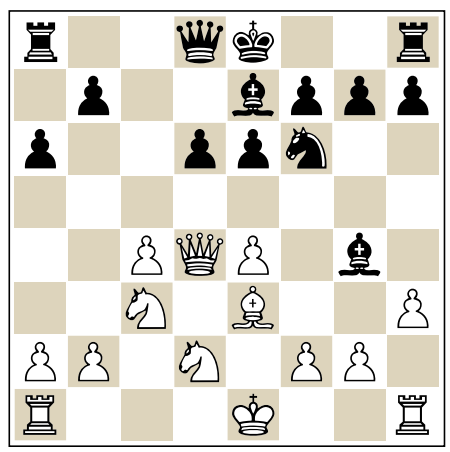
8.♘c3 e6 9.♗e3



9...♘f6 I mixed something up. I think 9...♘e7 would be much better here. Black would have no problems then.

10.♘d2! Now the bishop on g4 feels uncomfortable.

10...♗e7 11.h3



11...e5 A must. After 11...♗h5 she has the very strong 12.f4!, with the idea of g4 and f5.

12.♕b6

A safe choice, 12.♕d3 was more ambitious.

12...♕xb6 13.♗xb6 ♗e6 14.♘d5 ♗xd5

14...♖c8 was maybe wiser. But I thought that the text was easier.

15.cxd5 ♗d8

Now I exchange my bad bishop and should have no real problems.

16.♗xd8 ♔xd8

If I am not mistaken, I offered a draw here. I wanted to check her intentions, and I was clearly not happy with the outcome of the opening. Even though it is al-

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Deep Fritz 12

Times have changed. Only a few years ago, multi-processor systems were clearly a minority affair and if your computer had four cores, you were obviously a geek. Since then the relationship between both types of machine has changed and nowadays even notebooks are currently available in large numbers in dual core versions. For many standard uses of the machines, this leap in hardware performance is not terribly relevant. But chess programs, on the other hand, have long been high performance applications which benefit enormously from being able to call on the greatest possible performance from the system on which they run. But for multi-processor systems, that is only possible with a "deep" version, which unlike normal versions of the program can simultaneously use all the available processors for the purposes of calculation.

Thus, even on a dual processor system the new Deep Fritz 12 achieves an increase in speed of 60-70 % compared to what Fritz 12 can manage on a single core system. The result of this is an increase in playing strength but also an improvement in the quality of the analysis, because the program looks deeper into the position and spots the critical moments more quickly. Deep Fritz 12 is ready for the current multi-core processors. While it was being developed, it was optimised for four and eight processors, but it is already prepared for the multi-core processors which tomorrow will bring. The new version is capable of working with up to 16 cores.

But the quality of a program does not depend only on its calculating speed or even on its absolute playing strength, but also to a great degree on the quality of the program's interface and the character of the engine itself. The best analysis partner is a strong engine, but one which reacts in as human and therefore as comprehensible manner as possible and which is at home in all phases and aspects of the game. This

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Recommended*: PC Intel Core 2 Quad, 2.4 GHz, 3 GB RAM, Windows Vista or Windows 7, DirectX10 graphics card (or compatible) with 512 MB RAM or more, 100% DirectX10 compatible sound card, Windows Media Player 11, DVD ROM drive and internet access (playchess.com, updates and activation).*

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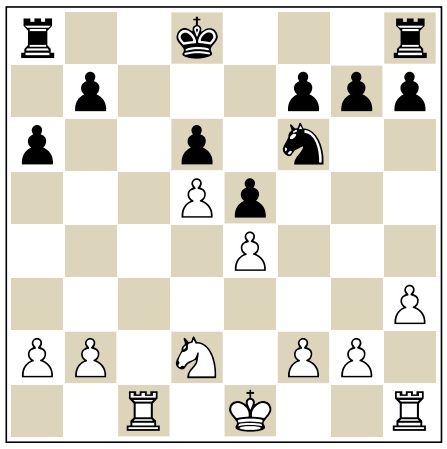
most equal, I had wanted to fight in some sharp Najdorf, and now I had to defend this endgame.

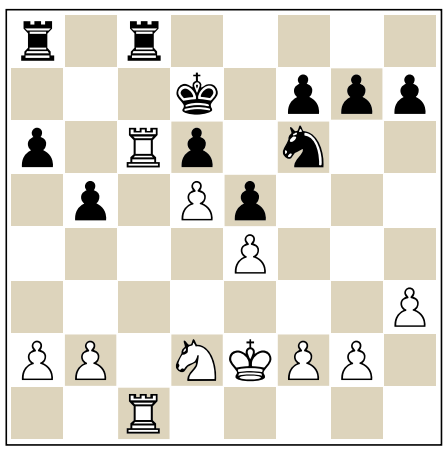
17.♖c1



17...b5!

After some thought I found this strong move. The idea is to cover the c4-square, while c6 would be covered by the knight from e7 via g8.

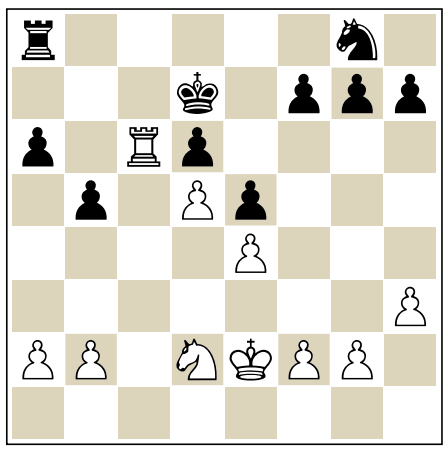
18.♔e2 ♔d7 19.♖c6 ♖hc8 20.♖hc1



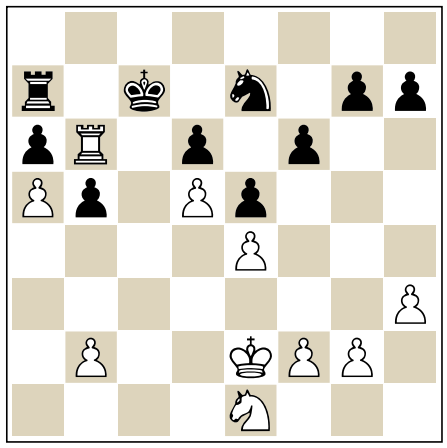
20...♖xc6??

I just lost concentration, because I thought this would draw anyway. 20...♘g8! first was the way to draw this position easily, for example: 21.a4 ♘e7 22.♖xc8 ♖xc8 23.♖xc8 ♔xc8 24.axb5 axb5 25.♔d3 ♔c7 26.♔c3 ♔b6 27.♔b4, and now there are 20 ways to prevent ♘b1-c3, the most convincing being 27...♘g6 28.g3 ♘f8 29.♘b1 ♘d7 30.♘c3 ♘c5 31.♘xb5 ♘d3+ 32.♔c3 ♘xf2 33.♘xd6 ♔c5 34.♘b7+ ♔b6, which is the line that we found during our post-mortem analysis.

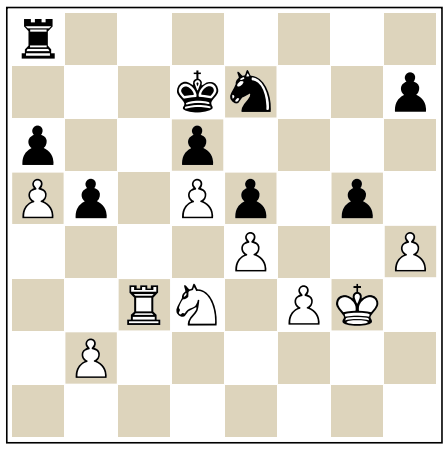
21.♖xc6 ♘g8



22.a4! Now it's over. **22...♘e7 23.♖b6 ♔c7 24.a5 ♖a7 25.♘f3 f6 26.♘e1!**



The knight transfer to b4 was what I had missed. **26...♘c8 27.♖c6+ ♔d7 28.♘d3 ♘e7 29.♖c3** Black's position is hopeless. **29...f5 30.f3 f4 31.♔f2 ♖a8 32.h4 g6 33.g3 fxg3+ 34.♔xg3 g5**



A desperate attempt to activate some pieces, which obviously doesn't work.

35.hxg5 ♖g8 36.♔h4 h6 37.gxh6 ♖g1 38.♖c1 ♖g6 39.f4 ♖xh6+ 40.♔g3 exf4+ 41.♘xf4 ♘g6 42.♘e6 ♔e7 43.♘d4 ♔f6 44.♘f5 ♖h5 45.♖c8 ♖g5+ 46.♔f3 ♖g1 47.♘xd6 ♖b1 48.♖e8 ♖xb2 49.♖e6+ ♔g5 50.♘f7+ ♔h5 51.♔e3 ♖b3+ 52.♔d4 ♖b4+ 53.♔c5 ♖c4+ 54.♔b6 b4 55.♖xg6

Black resigned.

After this shocking game (the result was more shocking than the game itself), everything turned upside down in my head. Now I no longer had ambitious plans to win the tournament, but was trying to keep some control so as not to lose my next game against Naiditsch, and to take my chances if my opponents would be so kind as to provide them.

The day that I lost my game was, in fact, not over yet. After the game Robin and I went to a restaurant and as usual we made some random orders. However, I was so disgusted by the dish I got that I decided to eat some of the chocolate cake we had in our hotel room. When the candy that we took after the dinner was no better than the horrible dish, I realized that it was simply not my day.

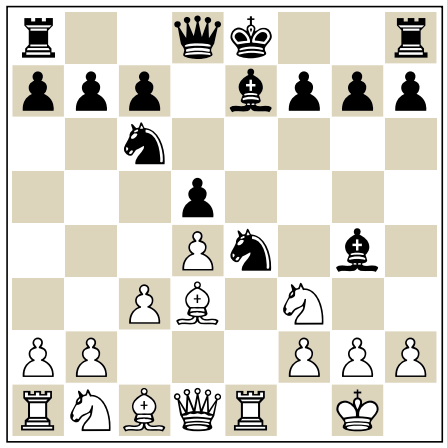
As I said, I was playing top seed Arkady Naiditsch in the next game. I wanted to play solidly, so that at least I wouldn't lose two games in a row before the rest day. In fact, Arkady surprised me in the opening and then after he found a couple of precise moves in the endgame, a draw was quickly agreed.

I was still leading by half a point when I had to play probably the most important game in the tournament, against Wesley So.

RG 6.4 – C42
Wesley So
Anish Giri
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (11)

I had had a whole rest day to prepare against Wesley, but since he has recently included 1.d4 in his repertoire, my preparation wasn't so easy. I didn't know what to expect.

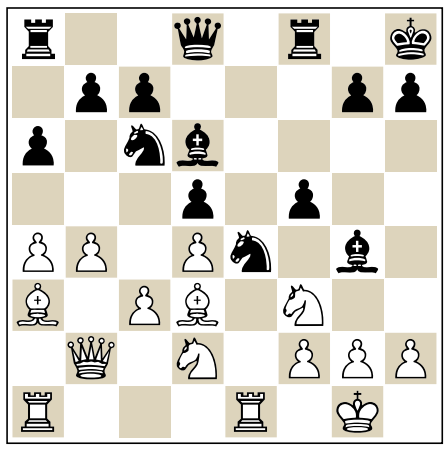
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6
I decided to opt for the Petroff again, since I felt that this game was very important, and I wanted to play solidly.
3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3 ♘c6 7.0-0 ♗e7 8.♖e1 ♗g4 9.c3



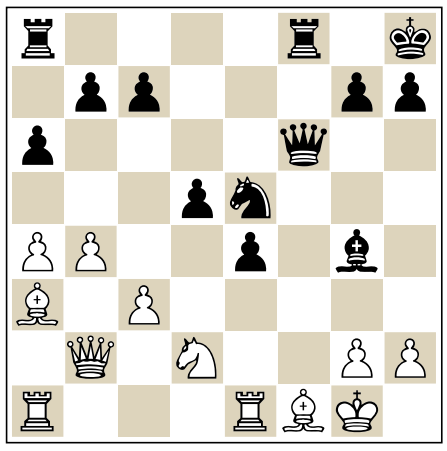
NEW IN CHESS

Wesley So and Anish Giri lost in thought at the start of Round 11, 'probably the most important game in the tournament'.

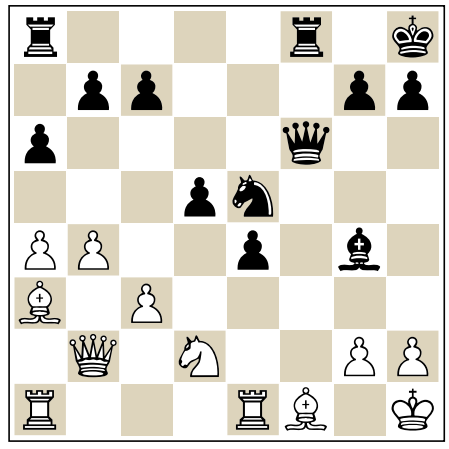
Wesley So has never played this line before, and even though I obviously knew it well, over the board I couldn't remember all the details.
9...f5 10.♕b3 0-0 11.♘bd2 ♘a5 12.♕c2 ♘c6 13.b4 a6 14.a4
Here I started thinking in order not to confuse things, a waste of time that I later regretted.
14...♗d6 15.♗a3 ♔h8 16.♕b2!?
This is a rare move, and now I realized that I would be unable to remember anything, whereas he had prepared this, so I started to think how to trick him and get him out of his preparation.



16...♘e7!
The exclamation mark is not for the objective strength of the move, but more for psychological reasons. I knew that So had prepared this line with the computer and that he was not so familiar with the position. So it was not surprising that this strong move took him by surprise. The computer doesn't show it because it underestimates the piece sacrifice.
17.♘e5 ♗xe5 18.dxe5 ♘g6 19.f3 ♘xe5 20.♗f1 ♕f6
Initially I had planned 20...♕h4, but then I realized that he has the simple but strong 21.fxg4!, and now d2 is never hanging, while 21...♕f2+ 22.♔h1 ♘g3+ 23.hxg3 ♖f6 won't work due to 24.g5!.
21.fxe4 fxe4

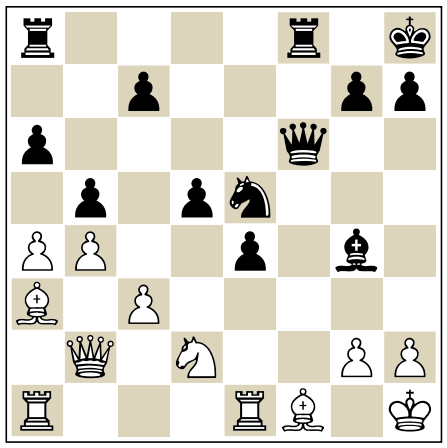


22.♔h1
So played this quite quickly. I actually think it is a big mistake and he should have taken some time, since he had a strong alternative in 22.♘b3!. But maybe he was right in playing quickly, because the only thing that disturbed me during the game was my time, which was slowly vanishing.
22.b5 is not so good because of 22...♕f2+ 23.♔h1 e3 24.♘b3 ♕xb2! 25.♗xb2 ♖f2 26.♖xe3 ♘c4!, with equality.
22.♘b3!, however, would have been very strong. I was thinking that I'd get enough play with ...♖ae8, or ...♕g5, with the idea of going ...♘f3+ at some point, but in fact it is clear that I was overoptimistic.



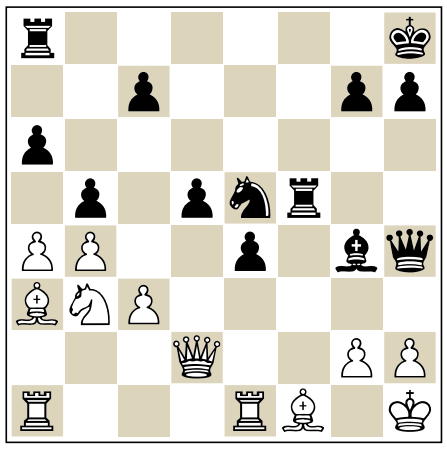
22...b5!?
When I saw this move, I immediately played it! I liked the idea of killing the white bishop on a3 so much! 22...♕h6!, with the idea of ...♖f2, would have been very strong and would have led to an

advantage for Black, but once I saw my move I couldn't stop myself from playing it!



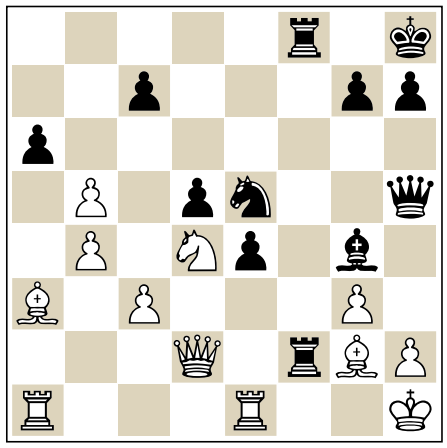
23.♘b3 23.axb5 axb5 24.♗xb5 ♕b6! was the point. Now, after 25.♗f1, Black has 25...e3!.

23...♕h4 24.♕d2 ♖f5! After this strong move I thought that I was just winning. In fact, I was overoptimistic again and I relaxed too early. Black may be better, but it is too early to claim victory.



25.♘d4!

The best move. 25.g3 was another possibility: 25...♕f6! (25...♕h5 was my original intention, but I had missed the following brilliant resource: 26.♘d4 ♖f6 27.axb5 ♖af8 28.♗g2, and now if 28...♖f2

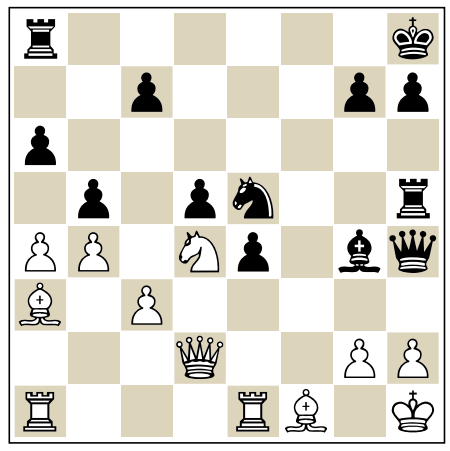


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

then White is saved by the brilliant 29.♖f1!. However, after 28...♘c4, Black still keeps enough of an attack for the piece), and here White seems to be in trouble: 26.♗g2 bxa4! (26...♖f8 27.♘d4 ♖f2 28.♕xf2!! ♕xf2 29.♖f1, and it is White who has an almost winning advantage) 27.♘d4 ♖f2 28.♕c1, and even though White is still hanging on, Black has several ways to cause White some trouble, for example ...♗f3, ...♘f3 or ...♘d3.

25.♕xd5 ♖af8 is the point. White is lost here.

25...♖h5 25...♖f2! was the only move! I saw the idea of 26...♗f3, but then... I thought that 25...♖h5 also wins and then forgot it! In fact, things are far from clear, since after 26.♕e3 ♗f3!, with the idea of ...♘g4, White has 27.♘f5! ♗xg2+ 28.♗xg2 ♖xf5 29.♕g3, and even though the engines are saying that Black is better, I doubt it. So in fact, the only time I really had an advantage was on move 22, when I should have gone for the simple but strong 22...♕h6!.

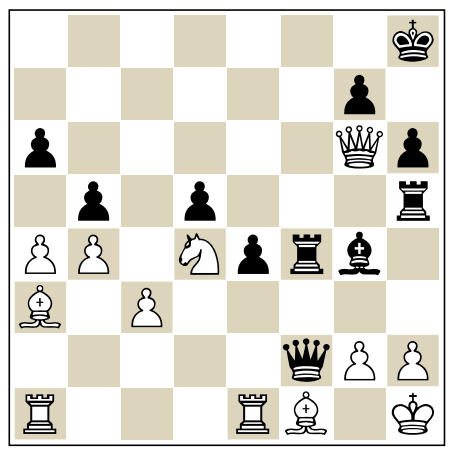


26.h3!

I had totally underestimated this one. In fact I had missed his next move.

26.♕f4 was the only move that I had seriously considered, and then 26...♘g6 (26...♔g8!? didn't work due to 27.♔g1!) 27.♕xc7, and now:

A) 27...♖f8!. This strong move was what I had seen. I don't know if White can survive here, but practically speaking he is lost. Here you can see how I mated my engine: 28.♕d6 h6! 29.♖e3 ♕f2 30.♖ee1 ♖f4! 31.♕xg6



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Wijk aan Zee B 2010 — **cat. XVI**

					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4		TPR
1	Anish Giri	IGM	NED	2588	*	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	0	1	½	1	½	9	2773
2	Arkady Naiditsch	IGM	GER	2687	½	*	½	1	½	0	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	8½	2734
3	Ni Hua	IGM	CHN	2657	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	0	1	1	½	½	1	1	8	2713
4	Erwin l'Ami	IGM	NED	2615	½	0	½	*	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	7½	2687
5	Wesley So	IGM	PHI	2656	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	7½	2684
6	Pentala Harikrishna	IGM	IND	2672	0	1	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	0	½	½	6½	2625
7	Parimarjan Negi	IGM	IND	2621	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	0	1	6½	2629
8	David Howell	IGM	ENG	2606	0	½	1	0	½	½	½	*	0	½	½	1	1	0	6	2601
9	Emil Sutovsky	IGM	ISR	2657	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	*	½	½	1	0	½	6	2597
10	Anna Muzychuk	IM	SLO	2523	1	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	5½	2580
11	Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu	IGM	ROU	2681	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	5½	2568
12	Dimitri Reinderman	IGM	NED	2573	½	½	½	½	0	1	0	0	0	½	½	*	0	1	5	2546
13	Tomi Nybäck	IGM	FIN	2643	0	0	0	½	0	½	1	0	1	½	0	1	*	½	5	2541
14	Varuzhan Akobian	IGM	USA	2628	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	1	½	½	½	0	½	*	4½	2519

and now the totally brilliant 31... ♗d1!!, with the idea of ...♖xh2+ and ...♖h4 mate, and ...♕xf1 mate! This line is not forced, of course, but it demonstrates Black's resources;

B) 27...♖c8 is only a repetition of moves: 28.♕d6 (I also didn't like the brilliant-looking 28.♘f3, which doesn't work due to the equally brilliant 28...♕f2 29.♕b7 ♕g3! 30.♔g1, and now 30...♕d6! was what I had missed) 28...♖d8 29.♕c7.

26...♖f8 27.♖e3!

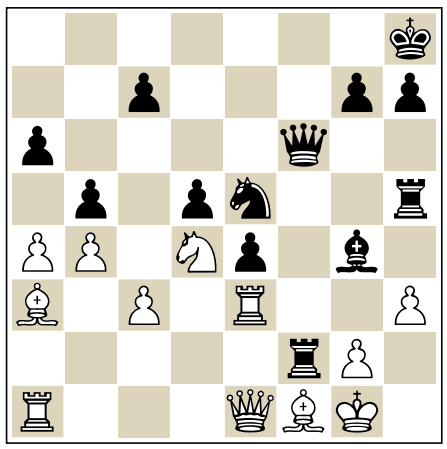
White has survived Black's attack, and after ♕e1 I will be left without compensation. I was very upset, since just a couple of moves ago I was sure I was going to win this game.

27.♕e3 was the only move that I saw, but then 27...♗xh3! wins on the spot!

27...♖f2 28.♕e1 ♕f6

28...♖h6! was the only way to fight on, but I was so disappointed that I was unable to find anything anymore. Play might continue 29.♔g1 ♖hf6 30.hxg4 ♕xg4! 31.axb5 axb5 32.♖e2 ♖xf1+ 33.♕xf1 ♖xf1+ 34.♖xf1, and White has a huge advantage, although after 34...h6, Black is still in the game.

29.♔g1!



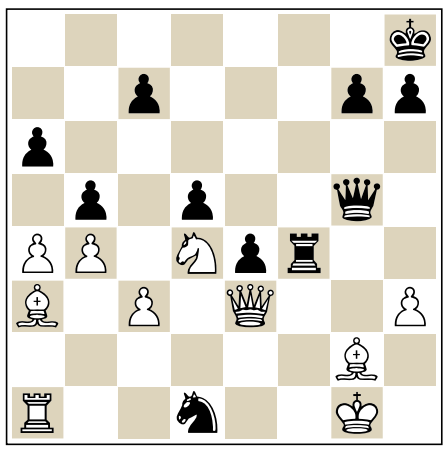
A very nice move. Now Black is totally lost.

29...♖f4 30.hxg4

My opponent took some time before making this move, and I thought he would find the simple 30.♗c1, and I could simply resign.

After the text-move I still can try to set a trap or two, even though I am completely lost.

30...♘xg4 31.♖h3 ♖xh3 32.gxh3 ♘f2 33.♕e3 ♕g5+ 34.♗g2 ♘d1!



Setting a last 'trap', which would only work if he played...

35.♕c1?

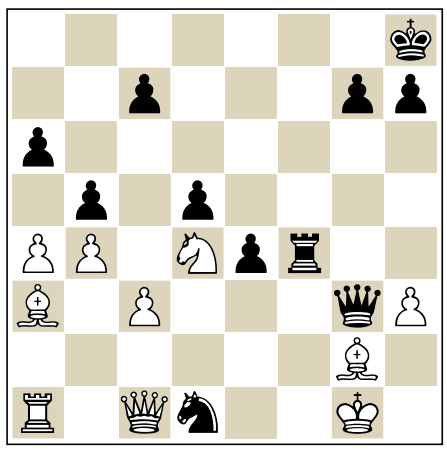
Here 35.♕e2! is something that a player like So would normally find easily. The strange thing is that I had only a few seconds left, whereas he had half an hour (!) to find the easiest win: 35...♘xc3 36.♕e1! or 35...♖f2 36.♕g4! both win easily.

Remarkably, 35.♖xd1, falling for the trap, also wins: 35...♖f1+ 36.♖xf1 ♕xe3+ 37.♔h1 h6, and now 38.axb5! ♕xc3 39.bxa6, and I cannot stop the a-pawn.

35...♕g3!

Luckily I was able to find this resource.

Now the forced win is already gone and the only thing he can do is to give his queen for rook, bishop, bishop and knight. But at least I would have a queen and four pawns.



36.♘e2??

I had been worried about this move for some time, but then I saw the mate and smiled somewhere deep inside. You cannot imagine how happy I was when he actually made this move.

So the way he should have played was 36.♕xd1 ♖f2 37.♕f1 ♖xf1+ 38.♖xf1 h6 39.♗b2 bxa4, and the win is not easy, since his g2 bishop is pinned, while my a-pawn will disturb him as well. Having said that, 40.c4!, opening the long diagonal, still gives him a large advantage.

36...♖f1+

I took some time before executing this move to make sure my opponent realized that he had blundered and would resign.

In hindsight I think that it was a very complicated game, and even though I had been lucky, I didn't feel that I had played badly. Maybe my worst move in the game was wasting time in the opening. And I must also add that So defended very quickly and very well until he relaxed in a totally winning position.

After this lucky win I finally realized that all components for tournament victory were there, including the final one – luck! I must say that I was a bit surprised by the fact that the daily prize wasn't awarded for this round in the B-group at all, because my win (the only win of the round) was a lucky one. By the way, in total I won four of those prizes: for my games against Harikrishna, Nisipeanu, Howell and Nybäck.

The funny thing was that I felt myself getting more and more nervous towards the end of the tournament. I could even measure it! The first days Robin and I always took two pieces of bread before the game, but towards the end it got less and less. At some point we started taking pea soup (one of the specialties of the Corus tournament, by the way ☺), and before the last two rounds we could hardly take any food at all.

Now I had one extra point with two rounds to go. To be honest, I wanted to win with white against Akobian, who was in bottom place, to make sure that nothing could go wrong with my tournament anymore. But unfortunately in the opening (some 1.♘f3 d6 2.d4 ♗g4) I wasn't prepared well enough, and even though I found a very creative idea over the board, it was not enough for an advantage. At some point I thought that I had ended up slightly better, so I checked his intentions by offering a draw. He refused. Then, two moves later, he offered a draw, which I refused. And then we continued playing. I was slightly better the whole game and got a rook ending of three against two on one flank, but at this level it is not possible to win this anymore. Luckily enough, all my pursuers also finished their games in draws, so a draw in the last round would be enough for me.

In the last round, I had to play Parimarjan Negi, and unsurprisingly I went for the Petroff. The game turned out to be much easier than I had expected. Negi tried a new idea in the 3.d4 line, but I neutralized it comfortably, and in the final position I was already much better. I even had some thoughts of playing on, but then decided that tournament victory was much more important. Immediately after our post-mortem, a lot of people asked for interviews and it took me some 20 minutes before I could finally meet my family. Later, there was a press conference together with Magnus Carlsen, who had won the A-group. It was a great pleasure for me to sit there with him and to hear some nice words from him about me.

NEW IN CHESS

We'll meet again. Anish Giri joined Magnus Carlsen at the final press conference. 'It was a great pleasure to hear some nice words from him about me.'

All in all, I had a great time in Wijk aan Zee and I am very happy that I managed to win the B-group, not only because it is always nice to win strong tournaments, but also because I got a ticket for next year's A-tournament!

Man vs MACHINE

A brief history of six clashes that shocked and rocked the chess world

In the decade between 1996 and 2006, man and machine waged a war for chess supremacy in a series of six well-publicized matches. Garry Kasparov's 1996 defeat of Deep Blue in Philadelphia is viewed as the first credible top-level challenge by a machine, while Vladimir Kramnik's 2006 defeat at the hands of Fritz in Bonn is generally accepted as the final battle. **Vasik Rajlich**, the human brains behind today's strongest and most popular chess engine Rybka, recounts the history of this defining decade and tells us where 'we' stand now.

These man vs machine matches were some of the most popular events in the history of chess, and deservedly so. They featured top-level play, interesting clashes in styles, a window into technological progress, and human champions under unusual forms of stress. They also gave rise to all sorts of overblown philosophizing about the intelligence of computers.

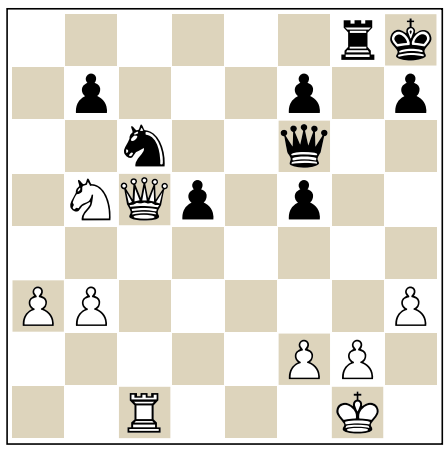
The question whether man or machine happens to be stronger at chess is an interesting one, but even more interesting is the question which aspects of the problem each is better at and how the two can best function together as a single unit. Machines are meant to be tools, not adversaries. Today, the emphasis has shifted to competitions between computer-assisted humans – or, as some like to put it, human-assisted computers. These so-called 'centaur' competitions give us a further opportunity to study the relative strengths of man and machine and to explore their symbiotic abilities.

In this article, we'll look at the man-vs-machine battles of 1996-2006, with an emphasis on highlighting the relative strengths of each.

In a later article, we'll look at the centaur battles which are raging on today. As we will see, man vs machine confrontations have a tendency to bring out the worst in both parties, whereas man plus machine cooperations tend to highlight the best of both sides.

Man vs machine play has a long history. Computers were allowed to play in human events as early as the 1970s, while in the 1980s it was quite normal for commercial programs to have official human ratings, obtained in normal human tournaments. The first machine which was a threat to the top human players was the hardware project Deep Blue, which was acquired and funded by IBM for the purpose of defeating the human world chess champion. The project was kept under careful wraps, and after 1995 did not participate in any events outside of two matches against Garry Kasparov.

The first of these matches took place in Philadelphia in 1996. Kasparov showed himself clearly superior, scoring three smooth positional wins out of the six games and adding two draws, one from a position of strength and the other a comfortable draw with black. This match is notable mainly because of the shocking win by Deep Blue in Game 1:

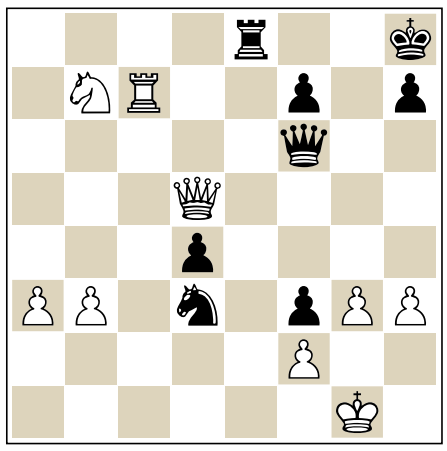


Deep Blue-Kasparov
Philadelphia 1996, Game 1

NEW IN CHESS

Vasik Rajlich, the human brains behind the strongest chess engine Rybka: 'Machines are meant to be tools, not adversaries.'

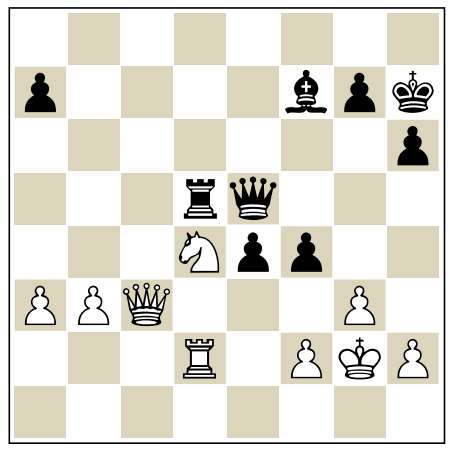
The position would have been balanced after something like 27...f4. Kasparov was more ambitious and instead offered an interesting but ultimately flawed pawn sacrifice: **27...d4? 28.♘d6 f4 29.♘xb7! ♘e5** On the surface, Black's compensation looked formidable enough at this point. Kasparov has made a career out of winning such dynamic positions, and I doubt that many human players would have even dared to accept the pawn offer. Deep Blue, however, can be neither scared nor bluffed, and calmly refuted Black's play with an elegant sequence of forced moves. **30.♕d5! f3 31.g3 ♘d3 32.♖c7! ♖e8** This still looked scary, but White had a cold-blooded refutation ready.



33.♘d6! ♖e1+ 34.♔h2 ♘xf2 Threatening mate. **35.♘xf7+!** The point being that 35...♕xf7 would lose to 36.♕d8+, etc.

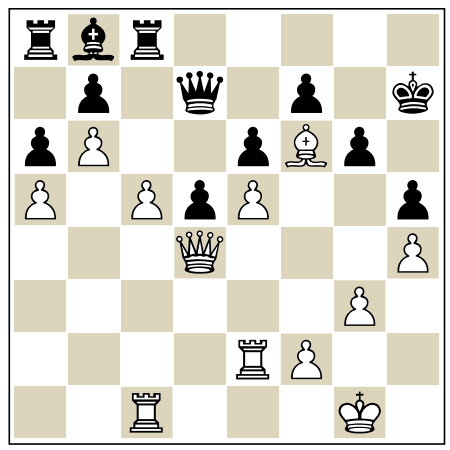
In human play, it is often acceptable to offer a sacrifice without working out every detail, trusting that sufficient resources can be found later – or possibly that your opponent will choose a less confrontational reply. A player such as Kasparov, known for his fearsome attacks and excellent tactical skills, benefits more than most from this combination of factors. Against a machine, though, a higher level of accuracy is needed.

Kasparov's wins in this match were convincing and prototypical. After the loss in Game 1, Kasparov avoided great complications and played more in the positional style of his former rival Anatoly Karpov, often making Deep Blue look foolish in the process. Here are two examples:



Deep Blue-Kasparov
Philadelphia 1996 Game 5

Black dominates the centre and won after **32.f3 e3 33.♖d3 e2 34.gxf4 e1♕ 35.fxe5 ♕xc3 36.♖xc3 ♖xd4**.

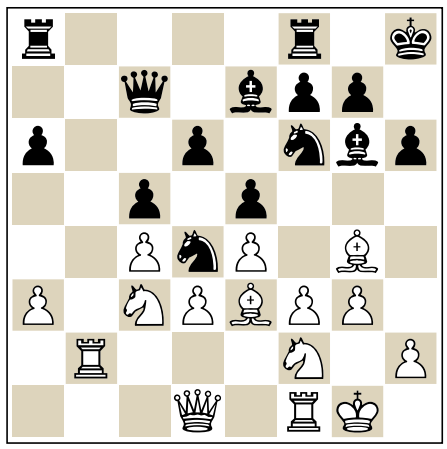


Kasparov-Deep Blue
Philadelphia 1996, Game 6

Kasparov has strangled the machine and now begins the process of cashing in with **40.c6!**.

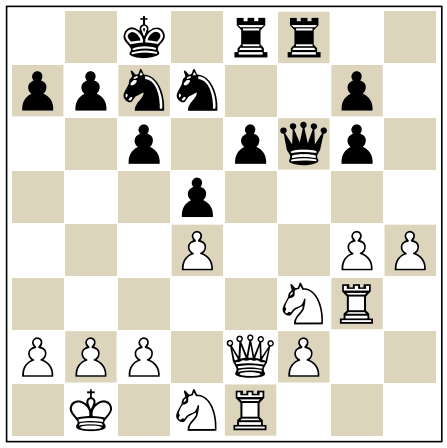
One year later, in 1997, the same combatants squared off in New York, and this time, to the shock of many, Deep Blue emerged victorious. The final score was +2 =3 –1 in favour of the machine.

A great amount has been written about this match and especially about the three decisive games. In my view, the three draws in Games 3-5 were at least as interesting. In all three draws, Kasparov played well and outplayed the machine. Twice, he did so with the help of very dynamic pawn sacrifices which even current Rybka versions underestimate.



Kasparov-Deep Blue
New York 1997, Game 5

White would like to play f3-f4, but at this moment Black threatens ...♕a5. Kasparov played it anyway: **21.f4!** Rybka prefers the simple 21.♘d5. **21...exf4 22.gxf4 ♕a5 23.♗d2 ♕xa3 24.♖a2 ♕b3 25.f5**, and in exchange for his pawn, White had gained space and put Black's light-squared bishop out of play. White's idea proved valid and he eventually gained the upper hand, although it wasn't enough to win.

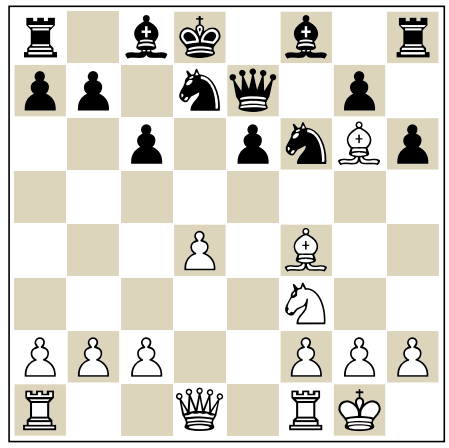


Deep Blue-Kasparov
New York 1997, Game 4

Here, Kasparov uncorked **20...e5! 21.dxe5 ♕f4 22.a3 ♘e6**, and after protracted manoeuvring was again able to gain the upper hand. Once again, it wasn't enough to win.

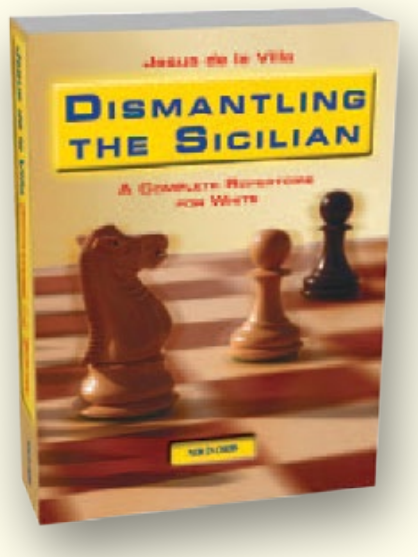
In these three games, we saw the improved defensive play of the machine, as compared to its play in 1996. These three games also illustrate another aspect of the man vs machine battle – humans are better in active positions, where they can focus on some inspired idea, while machines are better in defence, where a more important quality is to be objective and tirelessly alert.

In the end, the match was decided by perhaps the main Achilles heel of the human player: his emotions. In Game 6, Kasparov, seemingly unable to concentrate, played a game which would embarrass any grandmaster, and resigned after 19 moves.



Deep Blue-Kasparov
New York 1997, Game 6

Black's position is critical but playable – for example, Jeroen



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Noomen and Dagh Nielsen, Rybka's opening book authors, aimed for exactly this position with black in our 2007 match vs Zappa in Mexico City.

After an incomprehensibly brief five minutes and 25 seconds of thought, Kasparov played the careless (and losing) **11...b5?** inviting White to open lines leading to Black's king. White happily obliged: **12.a4 ♗b7 13.♖e1 ♘d5 14.♗g3 ♔c8 15.axb5 cxb5 16.♕d3 ♗c6 17.♗f5 exf5 18.♖xe7 ♗xe7 19.c4** And Black resigned.

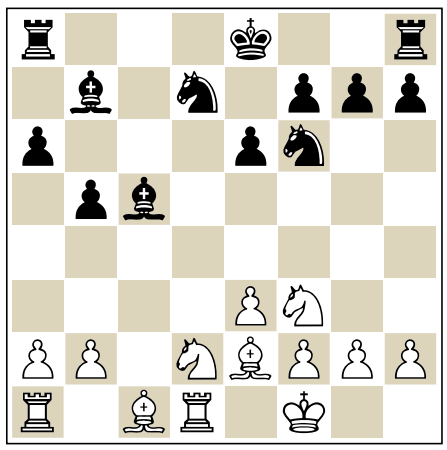
A popular explanation for the bizarre conclusion to the match is that by the sixth game, Kasparov had been worn down by the unusual circumstances. Deep Blue was a mysterious machine which had been constructed for the sole purpose of winning this match, and in fact it never played another game. It was shrouded in secrecy, played moves which were atypical of programs of that era, and the Deep Blue team was understandably happy to take advantage of the situation, rejecting all requests for information or explanation. Kasparov, for his part, perhaps did not have a sufficiently detached personality to best deal with the situation. However, as we'll see, human players often seem out of sorts and unable to play to their full strength when faced with a computer opponent.

In much of the general public's eye, the 1997 match in New York showed the superiority of the machine – and not only in chess. *Newsweek* had hyped that match as 'the brain's last stand', while according to *Time* 'the future of human civilization hangs in the balance'.

In reality, however, the battle for chess superiority was just beginning, and it would be another nine years before it would finally be concluded.

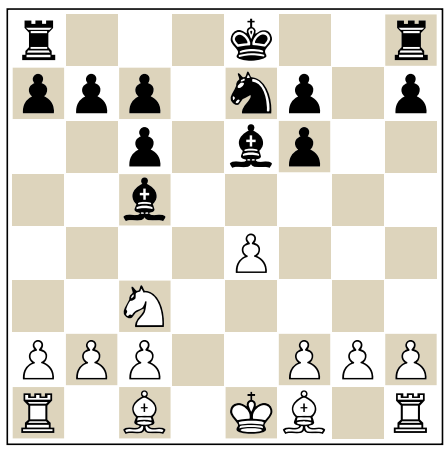
The next match, held in Bahrain in 2002, was between Vladimir Kramnik and Fritz. Kramnik had taken over as chess World Champion after beating Kasparov in 2000, and although Kasparov remained atop the rating lists, many speculated that Kramnik's quiet, objective style would be better suited for playing against a machine. Deep Blue was retired after its win over Kasparov, so the machine's mantle was taken up by Fritz, a commercial program with a long pedigree. Fritz is handled by ChessBase, a German software company run by chess enthusiasts. This brought an end to the hard-nosed off-the-board warfare which characterized Kasparov's battles with Deep Blue – the Fritz team even provided Kramnik with an exact copy of the program before the match.

True to form, Kramnik won twice in elegant queenless endgames. Endgame play has long been a forte of humans relative to machines and remains so to this day.



Kramnik-Fritz
Bahrain 2002, Game 2

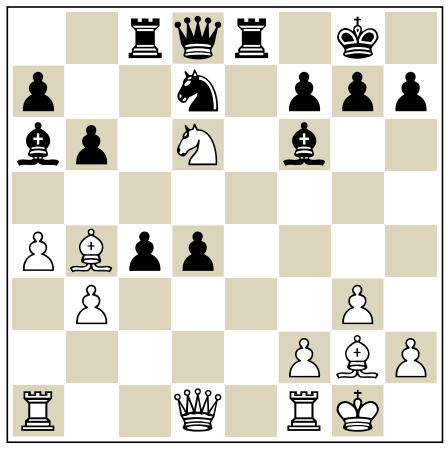
This quiet position contains a good deal of venom, and White quickly turned the game in his favour: **12.♘b3 ♗f8?! 13.a4 b4?! 14.♘fd2 ♗d5?! 15.f3 ♗d6 16.g3 e5?! 17.e4 ♗e6 18.♘c4**, and White went on to convert his now obvious advantage.



Fritz-Kramnik
Bahrain 2002, Game 3

Kramnik had accepted two pairs of doubled pawns in the opening and again went on to win. Doubled pawns are the sort of static feature which top human players will often handle in a more flexible way than computers.

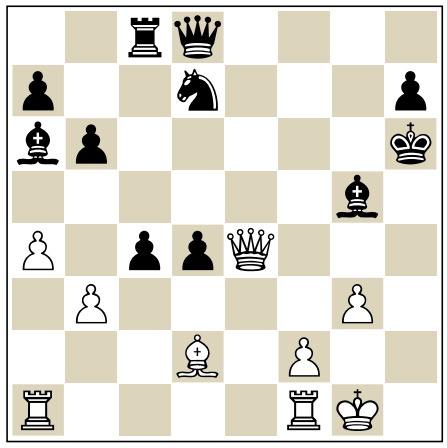
One area in which top human players probably don't get enough credit relative to machines is in their ability to dream up inspired attacks. Humans are often capable of unearthing incredibly deep resources, based on their belief in some particular idea, which they can then investigate with tunnel vision. The problem is that in a man vs machine match this is extremely risky, since doing so involves playing into the tactical strength of the machine. Both factors were on display in the wild Game 5:



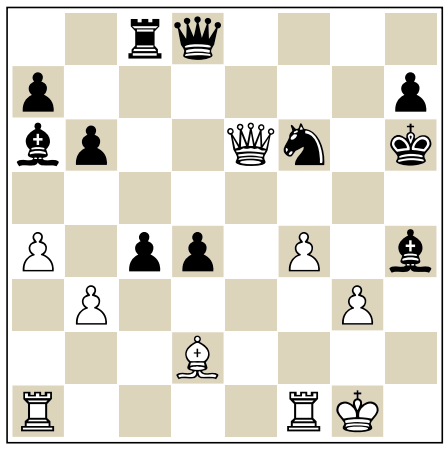
Kramnik-Fritz
Bahrain 2002, Game 6

White would stand no worse after the simple 19.♗d5. Instead, Kramnik couldn't resist an imaginative but ultimately flawed

idea: **19.♘xf7?!! ♔xf7 20.♗d5+ ♔g6 21.♕g4+ ♗g5 22.♗e4+ ♖xe4 23.♕xe4+ ♔h6 24.h4 ♗f6 25.♗d2+ g5 26.hxg5+ ♗xg5** Black's play so far had been almost completely forced.

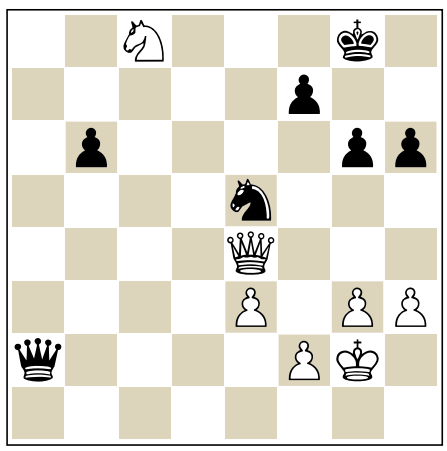


And now 27.♕e6+ would fail to 27...♘f6 28.f4 ♗h4!!



An incredible move without which Black would be lost and after which White himself would have been lost, i.e. 29.gxh4 ♕g8+ etc.

Despite the more friendly and casual match atmosphere, the human player again suffered two odd, uncharacteristic meltdowns, leading to a 4-4 match result.

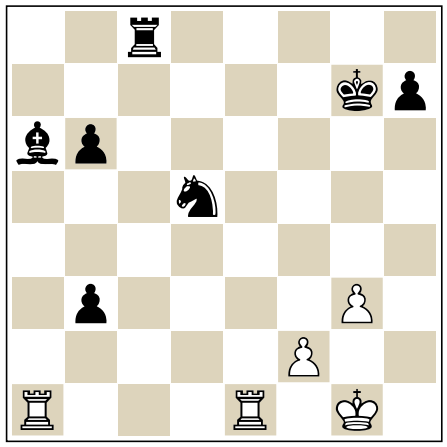


Fritz-Kramnik
Bahrain 2002, Game 5

DAGOBERT KOHLMEYER

Vladimir Kramnik dominated Deep Fritz in Bahrain, but the match was tied 3-3.

Here, Kramnik played **34...♕c4**, and resigned after the obvious **35.♘e7+**. Yes, humans make human mistakes, but this type of blunder is not typical of top human players in games against other humans.



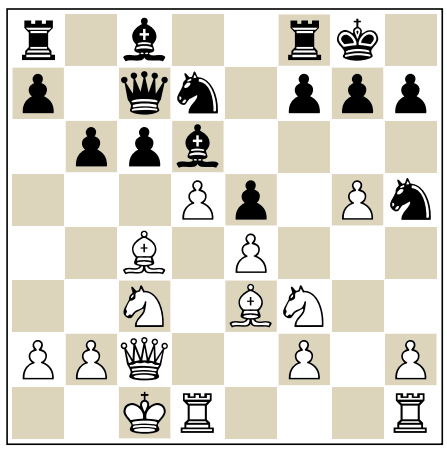
Kramnik-Fritz
Bahrain 2002, Game 6

Here, Kramnik resigned, apparently overlooking that White would have good drawing chances after 35.♖xa6 b2 36.♖a7+ ♔g6 37.♖d7! ♖c1 38.♖d6+ ♘f6 (the only way to escape the checks) 39.♖dd1 b1♕ 40.♖xc1, with good prospects for a fortress.

Just as when Kasparov resigned in a drawn position against Deep Blue in Game 2 of their match in New York, this is a complicated defensive resource which is easy to overlook. It's fair to say, however, that in both cases the human player was not very tenacious – both Kramnik and Kasparov seemed to meekly accept that the machine had worked everything out. It's a good illustration of the difficulties these players have in putting themselves in the right frame of mind to play these games.

The saga continued in New York in 2003, where Kasparov battled Junior to a 3-3 draw. Junior is, like Fritz, a well-known commercial program, and Kasparov was able to familiarize himself with its style and decision-making process before the match.

Kasparov was generally in control in this match, and won Game 1 in his trademark dynamic style.

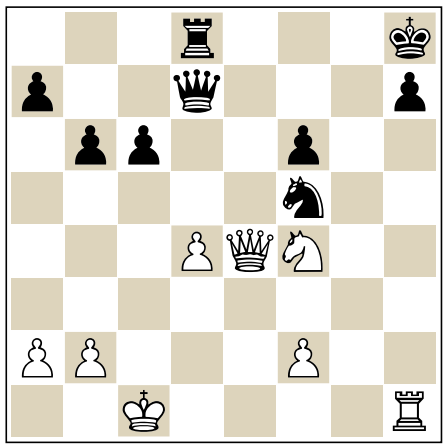


Kasparov-Junior
New York 2003, Game 1

The computer had castled into a mess and misplaced its pieces. White converted his advantage after **13...b5?** 13...♗b7 was neces-

sary. **14.dxc6! bxc4 15.♘b5 ♕xc6 16.♘xd6**.

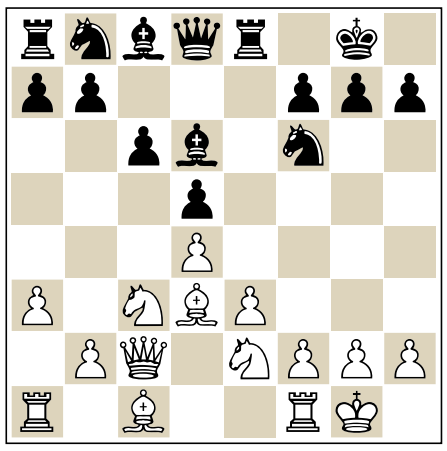
Kasparov also again lost one game which he shouldn't have:



Kasparov-Junior
New York 2003, Game 3

White had been calling the shots, but Black had defended accurately and a draw now seemed to be the likely result. Instead, White overpressed with **32.♖h5?? ♘xd4 33.♘g6+ ♔g8 34.♘e7+ ♔f8**, apparently overlooking that **35.♖xh7** would lose to **35...♘b3+**.

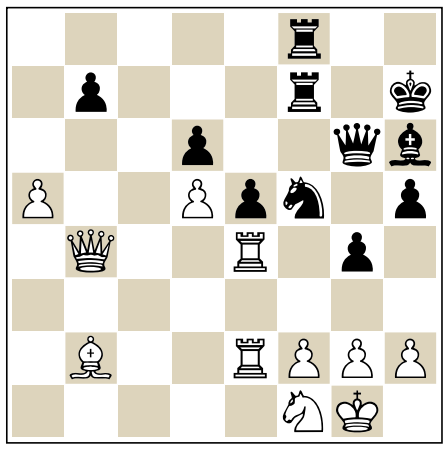
Another interesting moment arose in Game 5.



Kasparov-Junior
New York 2003, Game 5

Junior here uncorked the speculative sacrifice **10...♗xh2+ 11.♔xh2 ♘g4+ 12.♔g3 ♕g5**, with unclear compensation that eventually led to a draw. This dynamic sacrifice did not fit the 'beancounter' stereotype of computer programs and was praised as human-like, although of course it was the result of a very computer-like evaluation process. In the early 2000s, programmers discovered that it was beneficial to tune their programs more aggressively, assigning higher weights to factors like king safety and piece activity. This led to more speculative play which, in computer vs computer testing, was more often rewarded than punished. This remains largely true to this day – I am constantly surprised at how unmaterialistic Rybka needs to be in order to perform at maximum strength. Perhaps it is us humans who are overly materialistic.

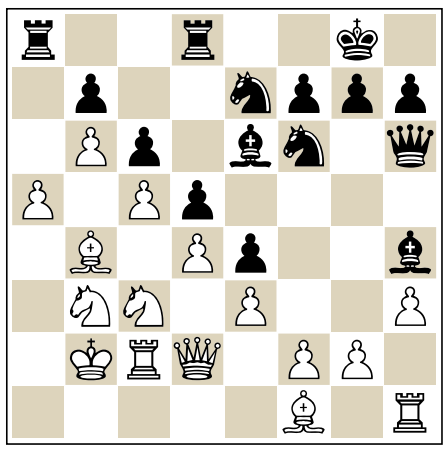
Still in 2003 Kasparov took on Fritz in a four-game match which ended with one win apiece. We again saw a human blunder of unusual proportions when Kasparov played:



Fritz-Kasparov
New York 2003, Game 2

32...♖g7??, running into 33.♖xe5.

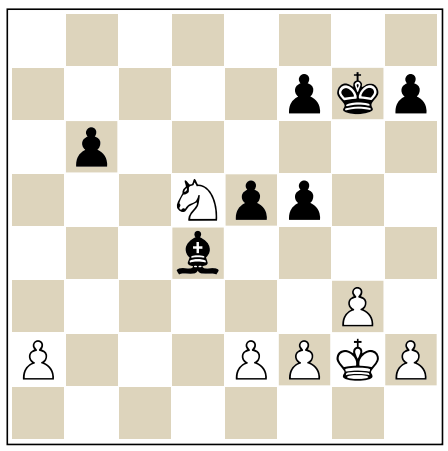
We also again saw a crushing positional win by the human, where the machine did not understand the position:



Kasparov-Fritz
New York 2003, Game 3

Fritz had refused to advance its kingside pawns for the previous 15 moves and was now completely lost. The well-prepared breakthrough began with **29.a6**, and White went on to win.

The final match was held in Bonn in 2006, where Fritz and Kramnik again squared off. Three years had passed since the two matches in 2003, and Fritz was now considered the overwhelming favourite. Many considered the result a foregone conclusion. It seemed to me that the human had better chances than many people expected – the humans had always been somewhat unlucky in these matches, making more mistakes than is the norm for players of that calibre. As it turned out, the previous trends continued. Usually, things that happen repeatedly do so for some valid reason and can be expected to continue, and this match was no exception. Fritz won +2 =4 –0, with the human's play again marred by blunders and missed opportunities. Kramnik's best chance to win a game came in the first game:

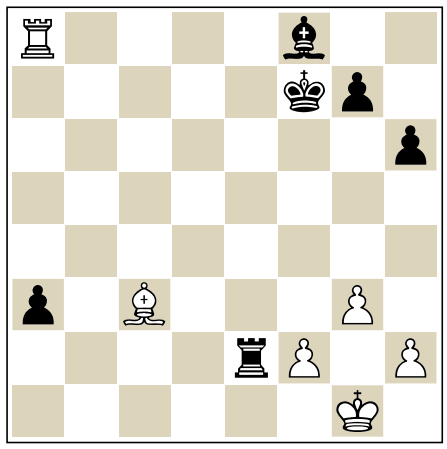


Kramnik-Fritz
Bonn 2006, Game 1

White had outplayed the machine to reach this position. The critical plan would have been 30.e3 ♗c5 31.♔f3 followed by ♔f3-e2-d3-c4-b5, when White would have had excellent winning chances. Instead, White played the modest **30.a4 ♗c5 31.h3 f6 32.f3**, content to put his pawns on light squares

before proceeding, and Black was able to draw.

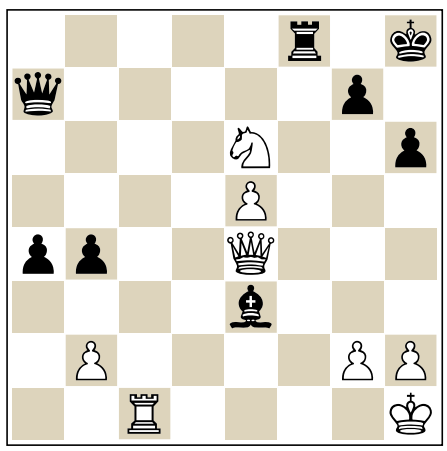
Human superiority in certain kinds of endgames exists to this day, as we saw two games later:



Kramnik-Fritz
Bonn 2006, Game 3

Even the latest Rybka versions misevaluate this as clearly better for Black. White is in no real danger and further simplified his task with **38.♖xf8+! ♔xf8 39.♗b4+ ♔f7 40.♗xa3**, with a dead draw.

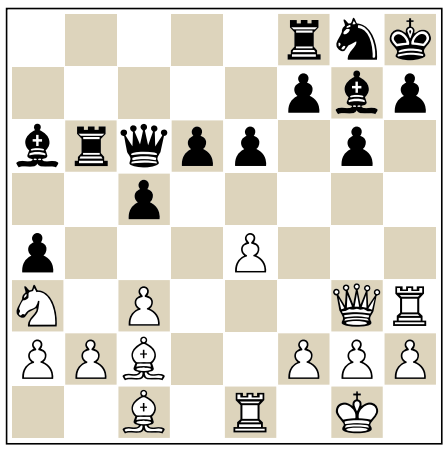
As usual, the match featured one outrageous blunder by the human:



Fritz-Kramnik
Bonn 2006, Game 2

Black has again played well to reach this position, and after 33... ♖e8 only he can think about winning. Instead, the game ended with an incredible hallucination: **33...♗xc1? 34.♘xf8 ♕e3??** Threatening 35...♕e1 mate – this would win on the spot if it didn't lose even faster: **35.♕h7** Mate.

Fritz ended the match by winning a murky tactical game, an area in which the machine's superiority has been clear for some time:



Fritz-Kramnik
Bonn 2006, Game 6

Black had lost his grip on the position, and now White cashed in with **25.e5!** Exposing, of all things, Black's weak pawn on a4. **25...dxe5 26.♖xe5 ♘f6** 26...♗xe5 27.♕xe5+ f6 28.♖xh7+ would lead to mate. **27.♕h4 ♕b7 28.♖e1 h5 29.♖f3 ♘h7 30.♕xa4**, leaving Black with no compensation for his pawn.

Over the span of this decade, between 1996 to 2006, we have seen the machines make clear progress. In his 1996 match, Kasparov won his good positions and easily won his match. He would be the last human to do so. In all four matches between 1997 and 2003, the human was clearly in control, gaining the upper hand in most games. The machines were saved in those matches by their tenacious defending and by the tendency of the human to make major blunders. Even as late as 2006, the human still had his opportunities, but the margin of error had been whittled down considerably, and the task of winning a full match was by then probably already too difficult.

While the question of superiority in head-to-head play under tournament conditions has been answered, strong human players retain a number of clear advantages over their machine counterparts. These advantages have been demonstrated in all of the man vs machine matches, and they stand out even more emphatically in centaur play, where a man + machine combination can correct the human's natural weaknesses in calculation, objectivity, defence and stamina. This allows unique human strengths in areas such as intuition, strategic thinking, endgame evaluation and attack, to shine more clearly. In particular, centaur games are filled with human-inspired attacks, which the centaur teams are able to work out together with their machines. We'll look at these topics in more detail in a later article.

Jennifer Shahade on Alexandra Kosteniuk's *Diary of a Chess Queen*

Gracious and restlessly in pursuit of progress

Fans and inquisitors of World Women's Chess Champion Alexandra Kosteniuk may think of her as a chess superwoman: disciplined champion by day, restless and seductive promoter by night. I hoped that *Diary of a Chess Queen* would help me understand whether Alexandra was more comfortable being Clark Kent, glasses or averted gaze shielding her from undue attention as she calculates, or superwoman, out saving the chess world from the horrors of obscurity. I wasn't disappointed as *Diary of a Chess Queen* does give you insight into the real Kosteniuk who, in the pages of *Diary*, does not appear stoic nor peppy, but gracious and restlessly in pursuit of progress.

Diary of A Chess Queen chronicles Kosteniuk's rise from struggling child prodigy to teenage 'vice-champion' to mother and World Champion. Kosteniuk included dozens of excerpts and poems from childhood and teenage diaries, which pulled the book together and made the sum greater than the parts. A few years ago there was a popular fad in the US to drink and read childhood diaries to live audiences. They called it 'Mortified'. Alas, Kosteniuk's diary entries are not mortifying, though they do give us a glimpse into how precociously professional she was.

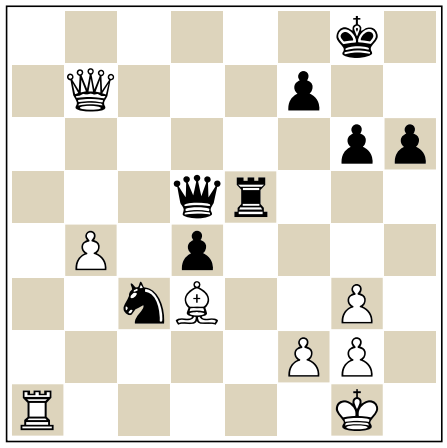
The Women's World Championship in Moscow, 2001, was a turning point in Kosteniuk's career. Seventeen at the time, Alexandra advanced all the way to the final of the Women's World Championship, blazing through GM Alisa Galliamova, future World Champion Xu Yuhua, and losing in the final to Zhu Chen. After this, Alexandra was coined the 'vice-champion' and her career began to move very fast. Alexandra says that 'it was the 2001 World Championship that made me understand how important it was to work constantly with the press; and since that time I have given a lot of attention to photo shoots and my off-the-board activities.'

Although the book does contain many photographs (118, according to Alexandra's twitter feed), you don't get the sense that Alexandra derives pleasure primarily from modeling and fame. For instance, seeing her name in the credits of the movie *Bless The Woman* was joyous but, 'During filming, I suffered a lot because instead of preparing for the World Cup that coming fall, I had to wait and do nothing while they set up lights.' Now that she is older, such moments don't bother her, because she has learned that all you need to do to pass such woefully unproductive time is to have a book of chess problems to solve blindfolded! (Trainer Yury Razuvaev let her in on this secret.) And all this time I thought idle time at airports was for playing video games on my iPod!

Her disgust at wasting time gives us insight not only into her chess success but also into her character and peripatetic schedule. Kosteniuk has a crowded schedule of tournaments, appearances and exhibitions and she is active in probono work. For instance, during the 2009 Holidays, Alexandra donated her time to give a simul to 9Queens students. (9Queens is a Tucson-based organization that I co-founded, which promotes chess to girls and inner-city youth.) Kosteniuk is known for such gestures in the USA (where she currently spends much of the year in a house near Miami), and if I concede that this may color my review of her book, I also believe it gives me insight into the sincerity of Kosteniuk's mission to promote chess.

The annotations dig deep into Kosteniuk's emotions at the board, and the variations will appease the serious player without intimidating the more casual reader.

On her game against Xu Yuhua at the Women's World Championship in which Black just moved her queen from d8 to d5:



'Strange as it might seem, this move is the decisive mistake. As before, Black could easily hold the position after 31...♔g7 or 31...♕f6. However, lulled by the slow pace of the game, she weakens her back rank for just a moment – enough to give White an irresistible attack.

32.♕b8+ ♔g7 33.♖a5 ♖e1+ 34.♔h2 ♕d7 35.♖a8

Now Black can no longer protect her king.

35...♔f6 36.♕h8+ ♔e7

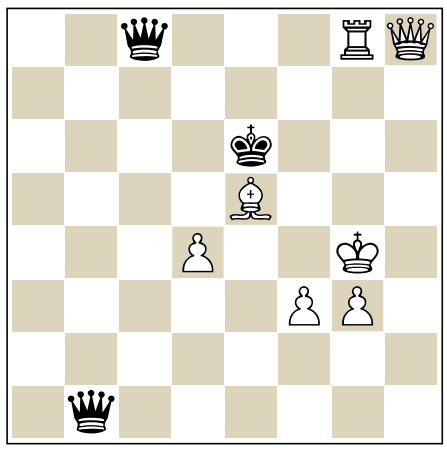
Black gets most attractively mated after 36...♔g5 37.♖a5+ f5 38.f4+ ♔h5 39.♕f6 ♕e7 40.♖xf5+ gxf5 41.♕xf5+ ♕g5 42.♕h3+ ♕h4 43.g4+.

37.♗xg6

And since 37...fxg6 allows White to end the game by 38.♕h7+ ♔d6 39.♖a6+ Black resigned.

I remember clearly how, after the game ended, I felt the Kremlin Hall of Congresses... and breathed in the frosty December air. Lifting my head, I saw the golden domes of the Kremlin churches, and at that moment the bells rang out... In a few more hours I would have to fight through a tiebreak to determine who would enter the World Championship final.'

Kosteniuk is also strong in describing the pain of losing and disappointment when beautiful variations do not materialize, like in the following example from her game against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave.



In the above analysis position, Kosteniuk's main line is 1...♔d5+ 2.♖xc8 ♕g6+ 3.♔f4 ♕h6+ 4.♔f5 ♕h5+ 5.♔f6 ♕h6+ 6.♔f7 ♕h5+ 7.♔e7 ♕f7+.

After Vachier-Lagrave avoided this, Kosteniuk admits to feeling demoralized: 'I played the rest of the game very weakly, and resigned on move 85... After this round, it was as though something had broken...'

The Paris 2008 Championship was a bad tournament, but in retrospect Alexandra considers it as an omen of imminent success,

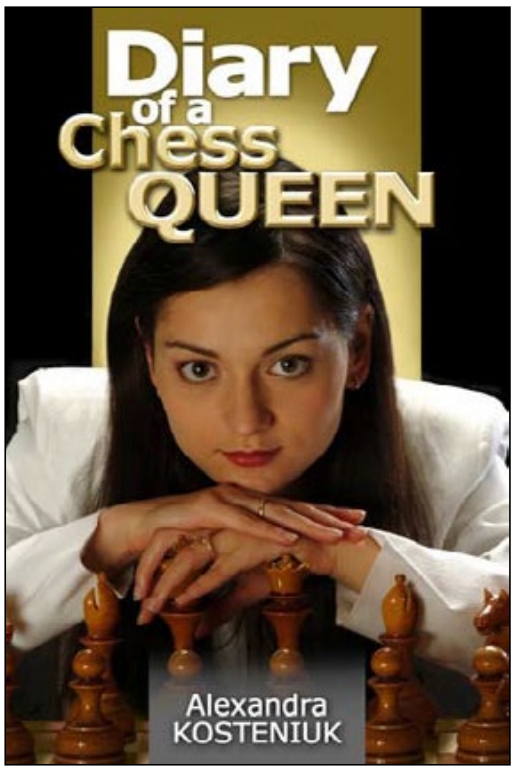
as she had also had a tough tournament prior to her 2001 breakthrough in Moscow.

The book comes to a riveting conclusion at the Nalchik World Championship, where readers can appreciate how tight the book is, and how tight with success Alexandra's life has been. In contrast to her 2001 final match against Zhu Chen, in her 2008 final against Hou Yifan, the tables had turned. Now Alexandra was the veteran facing the prodigy. Alexandra writes: 'I had played at least a couple of hundred tournament games, attended over fifty training sessions, won perhaps a thousand games in simultaneous exhibitions, given innumerable interviews, made my film debut, given my first public speech, written two books, graduated from the university, gotten married – and most important given birth to a wonderful baby.'

Throughout the book, Kosteniuk makes readers feel the heated emotions of battle. This is one of my favorite passages: 'Sometimes, during a game, your soul is so gripped and your adrenaline runs so strong, that the moment when the game ends and the clocks are stopped seems like the most wonderful gift in the world.' Other intense passages may strike readers as thrilling or over-written, depending on your disposition. 'I was just lucky that the game had so entranced me that there was no chance of my taking even a second to breathe; otherwise, I'm afraid my last bit of strength might have escaped with my breath.'

As the author of *Chess Bitch*, I must complain that in a few instances, Kosteniuk gives us a start and stop on juicy gossip. For instance she writes: 'Often enough, I have found myself the target of sharp attacks and insults from those who think they have a right to judge others', but then the next paragraph describes her result at the 2002 Aeroflot Open. It's not surprising that Kosteniuk takes the high road, but without examples it might have been better not to mention such adversity at all. It feels a bit like your friend calling you and telling you she has a big secret, but can't tell you what it is.

Kosteniuk gives ample credit to her supporters, especially her parents, sister and her husband Diego, who is also her business manager. And she doesn't just tack on a thank you at the end of the book, but goes into great depth about how the most important people in her life made her victory possible. For instance, after her daughter's birth in 2007, she explains how her husband influenced her to come back to chess seriously: 'I understood that I still had the ambition, the strength, and the desire to play and work. At that juncture, Diego supported my decision to return to chess... Of course, I was lucky in that regard – that although chess is officially my profession, I am not obliged to earn my living at it.'



Kosteniuk does not spend much time contextualizing her victory in the history of women's chess, but I can't honestly critique that. At 242 packed pages with a full color inset, the book is great value. The future will tell us if Kosteniuk's successes in combining a chess career with family and successful advertising campaigns will be an exception to the rule, based on Kosteniuk's energy, talent and, well, physical beauty, or a staying trend that takes women's chess in another direction. Certainly, Natalia Pogonina (25) has taken some cues from Kosteniuk. While amassing a 2500 rating and 20,000+ followers on Twitter, Pogonina knows, as Kosteniuk did, that part of media success means doing things no one has ever done. As such, Pogonina is writing the *Chess Kama Sutra*. I hope I can review that one too.

In writing *Chess Bitch*, I grew frustrated poring over dozens of articles about talented women players past and present, all with unoriginal editors choosing some variation on the title 'Chess Queen'. The difference with Kosteniuk is that she doesn't stop at being called a chess queen. Kosteniuk trademarked the phrase 'Chess Queen', maintains chessqueen.com, facebook.com/chessqueen, youtube.com/chessqueen and has 25,000+ followers on twitter.com/chessqueen. Alexandra Kosteniuk, like Garry Kasparov, does not wait for journalists to write the story, but creates the story herself.

Jennifer Shahade is the editor of uschess.org, author of *Chess Bitch: Women in the Intellectual Sport*, co-author of *Marcel Duchamp: The Art of Chess* and co-founder of 9Queens. You can find out more about her on jennifershahade.com.

The Aeroflot Open has the reputation of being the strongest open in the world. The respectable prize-fund and a trip to the Dortmund super-tournament that the winner receives are still a serious enough enticement for the dozens of strong grandmasters to flock to the Moscow Izmailovo Hotel. The bait is good, but to pull in the top prize you have to survive in a fish-tank full of piranhas. The ninth edition ended in a sensational win for 18-year-old Le Quang Liem, a name that still sounds exotic but may soon be a household name in top chess. With his back-to-back wins in the biggest Moscow opens, the Vietnamese grandmaster took his rating close to the coveted 2700 mark. Our man-on-the-spot **Mark Glukhovsky** watched the new star and shares his impressions.

A win in Moscow is an extraordinarily impressive line on a grandmaster's CV. In the rich history of the tournament there have been a multitude of top grandmasters who *didn't* win here – it's enough to mention the names Morozevich, Aronian, Radjabov and Kamsky. And although it's possible to accidentally fail to win the Aeroflot Open, like any other tournament, accidentally winning it is impossible. The level of interest in the winner is high, deserved and justified.

This year the winner's identity was doubly interesting. (When there were widespread shortages in the Soviet Union this odd slogan could be seen in shops: 'A fish dish is good for you, a whiting dish is doubly good for you.' Whiting, with which readers of this magazine are unlikely to be acquainted, is a noxious type of fish that's only suitable as cat food.) As an example, the chess world knows last year's winner Etienne Bacrot very well. It's unlikely that even the most dedicated chess fan could say something intelligent about this year's victor – the young Vietnamese grandmaster Le Quang Liem. I think that after his Moscow tour, which started with a win at the Aeroflot's younger brother, the Moscow Open, we should learn how to pronounce this difficult name correctly. I wouldn't want to compare Le Quang Liem with Anand – there's no basis for that yet – but we can forecast the appearance of a new face in the elite with a good degree of certainty.

Le Quang Liem,

Le Quang Liem is by no means a random person in chess, having won the World Championship in his age category at 14. The Vietnamese player arrived in Moscow as a strong, but nevertheless ordinary grandmaster with a rating of around 2640. He left as the winner of two strong contests. Playing almost exclusively with decent grandmasters, in a month he 'cooked himself' over 40 rating points and got close to the desirable 2700 mark. Analysing his performance at the Moscow Open

Le Quang Liem's extraordinarily modest – not to mention shy – exterior belies what he does at the board.

a name to remember

isn't in my job description; I'll only point out that he won all his games as White. His triumph at the Aeroflot Open was total, convincing and unconditional.

Externally he not only doesn't look like a strong grandmaster – he looks more like an anti-chess player. It's not about his height – Ponomariov is no giant, either, but his face always expresses his aggression and strength, his readiness to demonstrate his will and crush anyone else's. For chess, as Julian Barnes rightly noted, an 'explosive mix of force and intellect' is typical; but by Le Quang Liem's appearance you wouldn't say that he was capable of offending even a fly. His extraordinarily modest – not to mention shy – exterior belies what he does at the board.

Najdorf claimed that we can understand a person's soul by looking at his games. Judging by the games of Le Quang Liem, we're looking at a strong, sufficiently aggressive player who is well-grounded in the opening, who isn't considered an authority, but who calculates variations extremely well. He isn't afraid of ghosts (his game with Bu), he willingly leaves his king in the centre (his game with Bacrot), he doesn't turn cowardly under attack (his game with Cheparinov), and he confidently makes use of extra material.

The Vietnamese grandmaster was the exchange up in three of the five games he won at the Aeroflot Open, and he managed to gradually extinguish his opponents' ini-

tiative and exploit his material advantage. We can judge whether or not he has nerves only from his last game, when Le Quang Liem, the exchange up, offered his opponent Ian Nepomniachtchi a draw. That result guaranteed him victory in the tournament, but the impulsive Ian refused, and as a result naturally lost half a point, which cost him over 5,000 euros.

That tragicomic episode brought to mind a duel from two years ago – the same players at the same tournament. The young Russian grandmaster was confidently leading and won in the end, and when he got to play Black in the eighth round against Le Quang Liem, this was considered a huge stroke of luck. Ian won that game elegantly and beautifully, wasting almost no time on his play, in his best style. The progress that the Vietnamese grandmaster has made in the past two years is visible with the naked eye, which, unfortunately for the Russian fans, can't be said about his opponent.

What's the reason for the Vietnamese player's weighty achievements? The experts say that he's more Chinese than the Chinese themselves. That is, without possessing a supernatural, in-your-face, obvious talent, he works on his chess very hard, effectively and productively. He works, we should note, under the guidance of former Soviet – now Russian – experts. Even 20 years ago Vietnam didn't have its own chess school, and the fact that Le Quang Liem is moving up in the ranks of the top grandmasters can certainly be considered an accomplishment not only by the lesser-known masters from Russia who are working in Vietnam, but also by the new star's recently-acquired assistant Evgeny Bareev.

Evgeny Bareev, who held a coaching session with the Vietnamese player on the eve of his Moscow tour, describes his ward as follows:

'Le Quang Liem is an absolutely new kind of chess player, who hasn't been spoilt by the games of Capablanca. That's precisely why he's capable of demonstrating technique at the level of Shirov, for example. He very much wants to work at his chess, he loves it, he's dedicated to it. The seeds that we've managed to sow in 1½ months have fallen on fertile soil! He is talented, and, what's more, talented in a modern way, that is, in essence, a first-class calculator, he plays quickly and riskily. Nonetheless it's difficult to refute his risky ideas because he strongly senses the modern dynamic, and in the end everything comes together for him.

'My task was to improve the opening, which was clearly inadequate for demonstrating constant high results, and also to bring

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VLADIMIR BARSKY

Evgeny Bareev on Le Quang Liem: 'He is an absolutely new kind of chess player, who hasn't been spoilt by the games of Capablanca.'

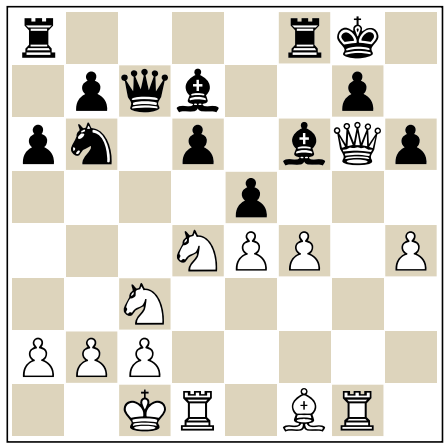
some kind of chess philosophy into it. When we were growing up we constantly associated with highly-rated, experienced players who understood the essence of the game, while he didn't have that privilege. I think that he has a good future: Le Quang Liem lives in a marvellous region – South Vietnam, where the department of sport helps him. His parents have a small construction company, and they also sometimes manage to attract sponsors. His father pushes him – either go into the family business or demonstrate some serious chess results, prove that you can earn a living from it so you don't only have rice to eat every day, like a poor peasant.'

Bearing in mind that for some reason the Vietnamese are very interested in developing chess in their country, and also looking at the latest results in the junior and youth World Championships, we can predict that pretty soon Le Quang Liem won't be the only difficult name we all have to remember.

Anton Korobov took second place – the young Ukrainian grandmaster who was Ukraine's chess hope at the start of his career. In the mid-nineties, when he was still a child, he performed well at the Kasparov Cup – an exceptionally strong event that the 13th world champion held in Moscow. This was real evidence of a big talent, but his career that had started so successfully was interrupted for one reason or another. Korobov's second place was his biggest success and simultaneously the big surprise of the tournament. What was it – an accidental success, or is the grandmaster who got stuck at the starting line finally driving out onto the racetrack? It's a difficult question, the answer to which we'll only get with time.

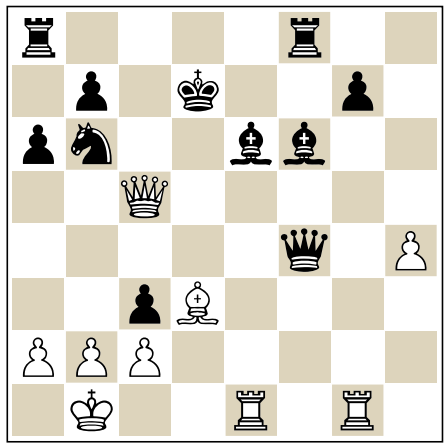
In any case, it's always interesting to watch Korobov's play. After three rounds he reached the modest 50 percent mark, but in the last six rounds he only gave up two half points to his opponents, and those were in his games as White (and with that he probably let Cheparinov off lightly). His two wins in a row at the finish – against Naiditsch and the other Vietnamese grandmaster, Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son – gave him a final result of +4, which would have secured him shared first place if Nepomniachtchi had agreed to the draw he was offered.

Third to sixth places were shared by Alexander Motylev (Russia), Zhou Jianchao (China), Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son (again Vietnam) and Boris Grachev (Russia). The magazine format doesn't allow me to cover the achievements of these grandmasters in detail. I won't refuse myself the pleasure of showing you just the final attack by a third prize winner from his penultimate round game.



Motylev-Amonatov
position after 20...e5

21.♕xh6 exd4 22.e5 dxe5 23.♗d3 dxc3 24.fxe5 ♕xe5 25.♕h7+ ♔f7 26.♖de1 ♕f4+ 27.♔b1 ♗e6 28.♕h5+ ♔e7 29.♕c5+ ♔d7



30.♖xe6! ♔xe6 31.♕xb6+ ♔d7 32.♕xb7+ ♔d6 33.♕b6+ ♔e7 34.♕c5+ ♕d6 35.♖e1+ ♗e5 36.♖xe5+ ♔d7 37.♖d5
Black resigned.

As often happens at the Aeroflot Open, the ratings favourites couldn't confirm their status.

Last year's winner Etienne Bacrot and the number one on the starting list Maxime Vachier-Lagrave played their tournament on the top tables, but didn't get into the prizes. Then again, the latter shouldn't complain about his fate – he won in the selection tournament for the World Blitz Championship, which is traditionally held immediately after the Aeroflot Open ends. Prize money of 10,000 euros and guaranteed participation in the World Championship was a wonderful gift in itself after not the most successful performance in the main tournament. Unfortunately, the format of this article doesn't allow me to describe the fascinating blitz marathon in more detail, in which such stars of speedy play like, for example, Mamedyarov, Dreev, Tkachiev and Ponomariov took part (none of them got into the successful six, the qualifiers were Vachier-Lagrave, Bu Xiangzhi, Nepomniachtchi, Mamedov, Savchenko and Grachev).

On the other hand, writing about blitz is much the same as retelling the story of a porn film. In both cases watching it is much more interesting than reading it. Let's have a look at one of the best efforts of the Aeroflot winner with his notes.

NOTES BY
Le Quang Liem

SL 3.1 – D15
Le Quang Liem
Etienne Bacrot
Moscow 2010 (2)

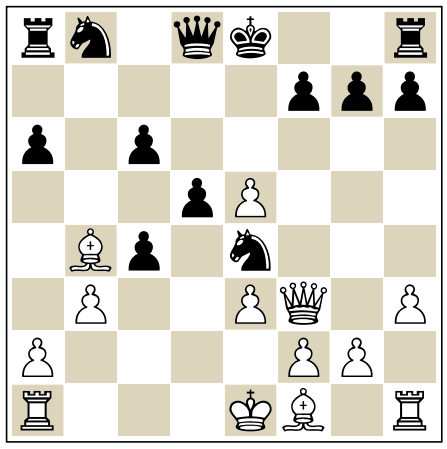
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 a6 5.♘c3 b5 6.b3 ♗g4 7.h3

An alternative is 7.♗e2 e6 8.0-0 ♘bd7 9.h3 ♗h5 10.♗b2 ♗d6 11.♘e5, with an equal position.

7...♗xf3 8.♕xf3 e5

This line is more or less forced.

9.dxe5 ♗b4 10.♗d2 ♗xc3 11.♗xc3 ♘e4 12.♗b4 bxc4



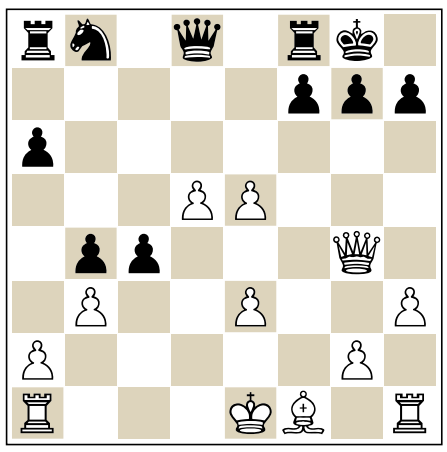
13.♕g4!?

A very interesting idea, introduced by former World Champion Vladimir Kramnik last year. After his win against Ni Hua this line came into fashion and got some tournament practice. From my analysis I believe that White's position is to be preferred.

13...c5 14.f3 cxb4

Worthy of serious attention is 14...♘c6 15.fxe4 ♘xb4 16.♕xg7 ♖f8 17.exd5, with huge complications. So far this line was only tested twice, and both games were played in 2010 (White won both). Only further practical experience can give a correct evaluation for this position. In general White just sacrifices a whole rook to get active pieces and a dangerous initiative. Whether it is enough to win, I cannot say for sure...

15.fxe4 0-0 16.exd5



16...♘d7?!

Bacrot comes up with a novelty. Since he spent a lot of time, I guess it was not his home preparation.

Grabbing the pawns with 16...♕xd5 17.♗xc4 ♕xe5 18.0-0 would give White a strong initiative.

Clearly 16...cxb3 is the best move, and then after 17.♕d4 ♘d7 18.axb3 ♕g5 19.♕f4 ♕g6 we have a critical opening position, which will be discussed later.

17.♕d4?!

Stronger was 17.♗xc4 ♘xe5 18.♕f4 ♕d6 19.0-0 ♖fc8 20.♖ac1 ♖c5 21.♗d3!, when White is just a healthy pawn up.

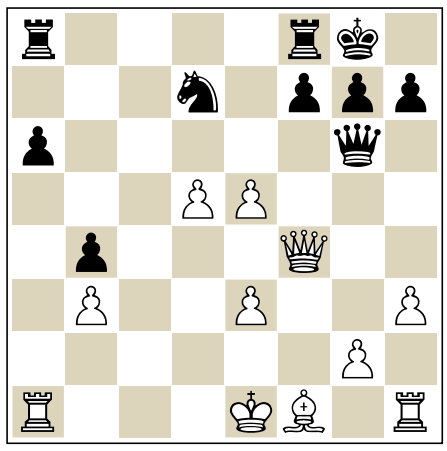
In the game I underestimated this possibility. And also, I played 17.♕d4 because I wanted to offer him a transposition to the line after 16...cxb3, for which I had prepared a novelty on move 20!

17...cxb3

And here we have this familiar position! The alternative was 17...c3 18.♕xb4 ♘xe5 19.♕d4 ♕g5 20.♕f4 ♕e7, with a complicated battle.

18.axb3 ♕g5 19.♕f4 ♕g6

Not, of course, 19...♕xe5? 20.♕xe5 ♘xe5 21.♗xa6, as in the afore-mentioned game Kramnik-Ni Hua, London 2009.



20.♖d1

This is the new move. I did not want to go for the repetition 20.♕g4 ♕h6 21.♕f4 ♕g6 22.♕g4 ♕h6 that was seen in Grischuk-Aronian, Bursa 2010.

20...♕c2

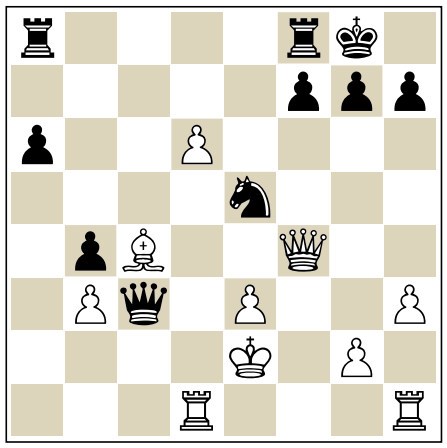
After 20...♖ae8 21.♗d3 ♕b6 22.0-0 ♖xe5 23.d6 ♖xe3 24.♔h1 White has strong compensation for his minimum deficit. At any point he can regain his pawn and

have the better chances in the endgame. If Black defends accurately, he may be able to hold.

21.♗c4

21.♕xb4 may also be playable, but to me it seems risky. White has to complete his development quickly, otherwise he may get worse.

21...♕c3+ 22.♔e2 ♘xe5 23.d6



23...♖ad8?!

23...♖ac8 could be an improvement, though it is obvious that Black has to suffer.

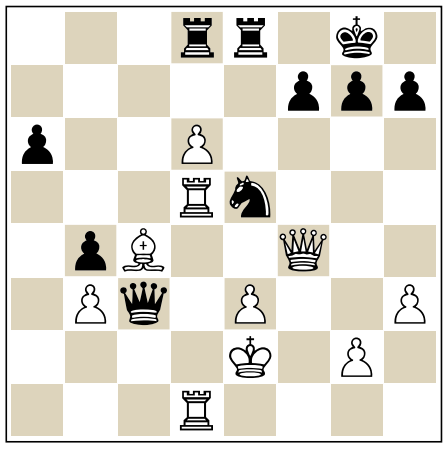
24.♖d5

With this move White keeps the initiative.

24...♖fe8

After 24...♕c2+ 25.♖d2 ♕g6 26.g4 White's chances are to be preferred.

25.♖hd1

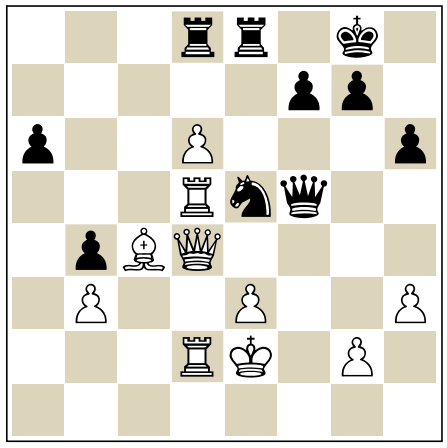


Now White brings all his pieces into play. His d-pawn is dangerous, and it is hard to suggest a useful move for Black.

25...h6 26.♕d4 ♕c2+

26...♘c6 runs into 27.♕b6, and on the next move the d-pawn marches on to d7.

27.♖d2 ♕f5



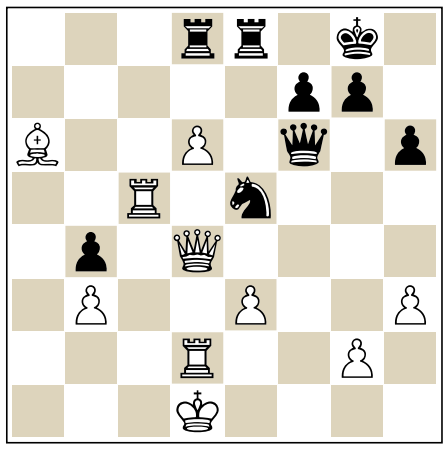
28.♖c5!

White prevents the annoying ...♖e6, and also controls the c-file, which will be necessary a few moves later.

28...♕g5 29.♔d1

White's king is completely safe.

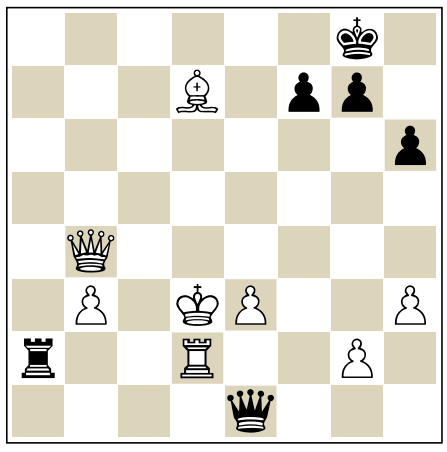
29...♕f6 30.♗xa6



30...♖e6?

My opponent had probably missed my 36th move. But anyway, White should be winning here.

31.♖c8 ♖xc8 32.♗xc8 ♕f1+ 33.♔c2 ♖e8 34.d7 ♘xd7 35.♗xd7 ♖a8 36.♕xb4 ♖a2+ 37.♔c3 ♕e1 38.♔d3



Everything is well protected! The rest is simple.

38...♖a1 39.♕b8+ ♔h7 40.♕f4 ♕b1+ 41.♔c3 ♕c1+ 42.♖c2 ♕e1+ 43.♔c4 ♔g8 44.♕e4 ♕a5 45.b4 ♕a6+ 46.♗b5 ♕f6 47.♕d4 ♕e6+ 48.♔c3 ♖e1 49.♗e2 ♕c6+ 50.♗c4 ♕a4 51.♕d8+ ♔h7 52.♕d3+ ♔g8 53.♖a2 ♕c6 54.b5 ♕f6+ 55.♔b3

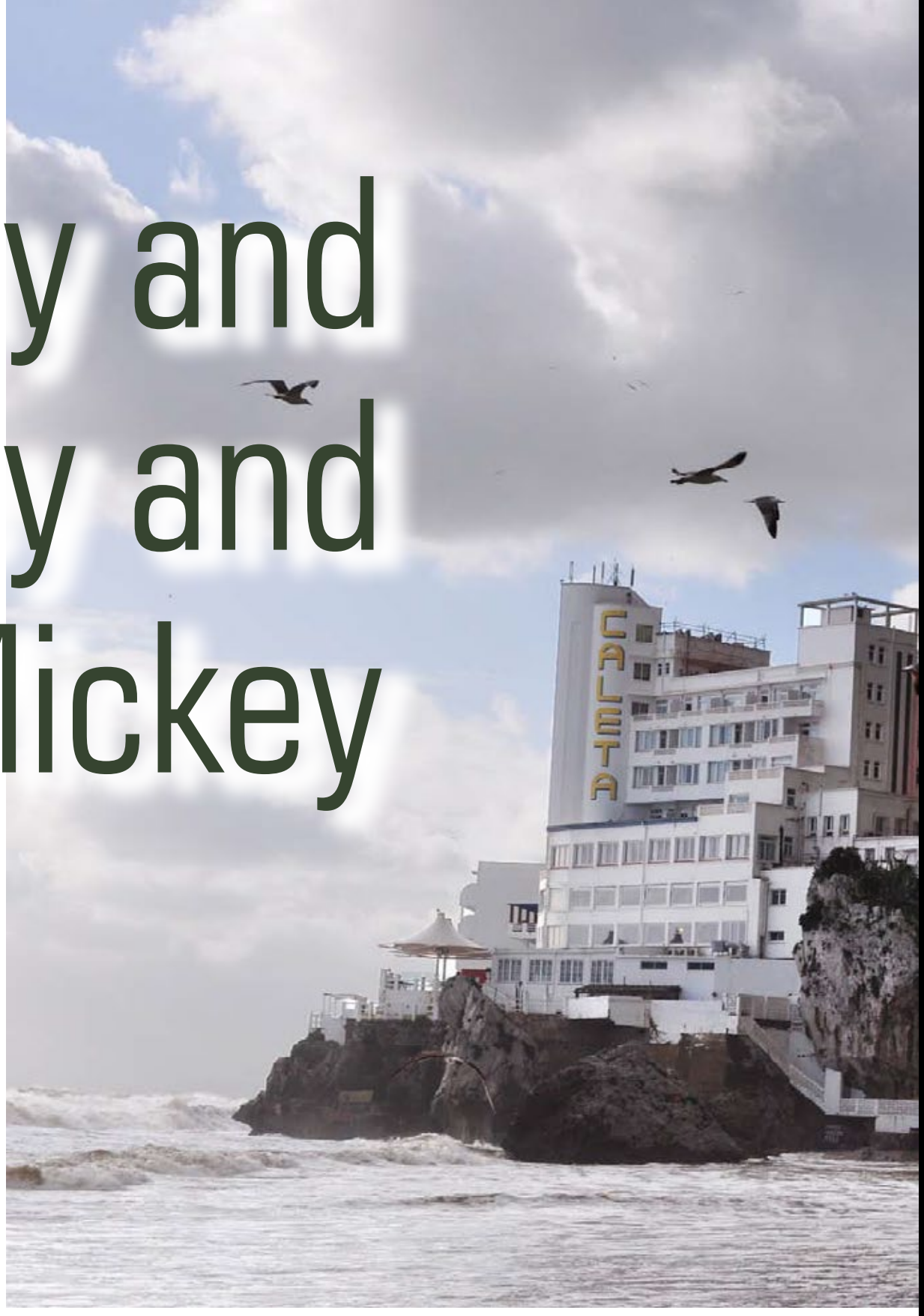
Black resigned.

Moscow Aeroflot 2010

					TPR
1	Le Quang Liem	VIE	2647	7	2871
2	Korobov	UKR	2648	6½	2775
3	Nguyen Ngoc Tru.	VIE	2616	6	2749
4	Motylev	RUS	2697	6	2755
5	Grachev	RUS	2653	6	2744
6	Zhou Jianchao	CHN	2632	6	2777
7	Cheparinov	BUL	2660	5½	2714
8	Bu Xiangzhi	CHN	2673	5½	2699
9	Bacrot	FRA	2713	5½	2717
10	Timofeev	RUS	2652	5½	2707
11	So	PHI	2656	5½	2693
12	Sargissian	ARM	2680	5½	2681
13	Vachier-Lagrave	FRA	2730	5½	2700
14	Najer	RUS	2665	5½	2698
15	Nepomniachtchi	RUS	2658	5½	2691
16	Iturrizaga	VEN	2616	5½	2676
17	Bareev	RUS	2643	5½	2699
18	Dreev	RUS	2650	5½	2676
19	Savchenko	RUS	2638	5½	2728
20	Khairullin	RUS	2605	5	2705
21	Khalifman	RUS	2616	5	2690
22	Grigoriants	RUS	2560	5	2687
23	Pashikian	ARM	2647	5	2671
24	Naiditsch	GER	2687	5	2649
25	Melkumyan	ARM	2583	5	2667
26	Sasikiran	IND	2653	5	2681
27	Volokitin	UKR	2692	5	2652
28	Zviagintsev	RUS	2642	5	2649
29	Amonatov	TJK	2634	5	2636
30	Belov	RUS	2595	5	2677
31	Vescovi	BRA	2660	5	2659
32	Kamsky	USA	2693	5	2649
33	Kobalia	RUS	2637	5	2642
34	McShane	ENG	2616	5	2646
35	Tregubov	RUS	2628	5	2603
36	Predojevic	BIH	2642	5	2620
37	Salgado Lopez	ESP	2584	5	2653
38	Novikov	RUS	2557	5	2646
39	Mamedov	AZE	2640	5	2658

80 players, 9 rounds

Franny and Zooey and Mickey



Stuart Conquest

The eerie tale of the *Mary Celeste* remains one of the world's great mysteries. As a child I remember reading the story and being fascinated by the impossible and yet inescapable facts. A ship, abandoned, is found drifting aimlessly at sea, with few clues as to why or when her crew left her, and with no obvious signs of distress or foul play. Accompanying the story was a picture of the 'ghost ship', and with a young boy's imagination I wondered at the silent decks, the empty chairs drawn up around the table where breakfast was about to be served. Conan Doyle wrote a story about the ship that many thought was a true account of what had happened. The year was 1872. It is interesting that the captain of the *Dei Gratia* and the captain of the *Mary Celeste* had dinner together in New York the evening before the latter set sail. It was the *Dei Gratia* that, leaving port a week later, came upon the derelict vessel. The *Mary Celeste* was adrift in the Atlantic, some 600 miles west of Portugal, with food and fresh water aboard, and although there was water in the hold she was still seaworthy. Of the ten people aboard, which included the captain's wife and young daughter, not a trace was found. The ship's papers were missing, as was the only lifeboat. The cargo was apparently intact, although later nine barrels of commercial alcohol – she was carrying 1,701 – were found to be empty, and several theories of what might have happened turn on this crucial fact. But whatever the truth of the affair – and it will probably never be known – this nautical digression I preface to this report for a simple reason: the *Mary Celeste*, once found, was sailed safely to Gibraltar, where she stayed for three months while a full investigation was carried out.

Gibraltar! Imagine the crowds of tourists that would flock to see the *Mary Celeste* if she were there today! She would be the most visited ship in the world. In the tra-

ZELJKA MALOBABIC

With the title (referring to Gibtelecom finalist Francisco Vallejo, top woman Natalia Zhukova and overall winner Michael Adams) the author pays tribute to J.D. Salinger, best known for his novel The Catcher in the Rye (1951), who died on January 27 of this year at the age of 91.

The Caleta Hotel, the home of the Gibtelecom Festival and an increasingly popular destination for chess players of all strengths and from all corners of the world.

dition of Conan Doyle we might suppose a chess game begun but never completed, the pieces still frozen at the moment when the calamity – whatever it was – broke out. That position, like an artefact from Pompeii, would make a coveted emblem for the annual chess festival. Alas, after the investigation the *Mary Celeste* left Gibraltar, changed hands many times, and was finally sunk in an insurance scam in the Caribbean in 1885. And in that ignoble manner she exited history, taking her secrets to the ocean floor.

When this Festival began, in 2003, the Gibtelecom Masters (Open) section attracted 59 players, while in the amateur event the total was just 16. Those figures are dwarfed by the numbers who now visit. We now run four well-attended 5-round amateur events in the mornings, and many players take maximum advantage of the Festival's schedule to play in the Masters too, which equates to an astonishing 20 tournament games in ten days: an extreme chess vacation, if you like. There are also evening blitz events! Year after year, people return to breathe in the unique chess atmosphere which permeates the Caleta Hotel – almost every room is taken by a chess participant – and within this concentration of minds the rule, not the exception, is to see club players mixing informally with the stars: for many famous players either play, or visit, and the overall sensation is like that of an annual gathering of friends. This is one chess date that players should book up well in advance.

The Masters this year had 224 entrants, of which 34 were GMs, and 25 IMs. Over its eight editions the Gibtelecom Festival has grown out of all recognition, so that few would now dispute its claim to be one of the world's leading Opens. In fact, many professional players, those who spend their working year travelling far and wide, have no hesitation in naming it the very best. It is clear that the generous prize-fund is a major attraction, and for this the play-

ers have the sponsors to thank. The rating band prizes, beginning at under-2200 and rising to under-2599, mean that all participants in the Masters have a realistic chance of not only playing world-class opposition, but also of taking home more cash than they arrived with.

ZELJKA MALOBABIC

Jovanka (Houska) and Stuart (Conquest) and Tara (Adams, née MacGowran and Mickey Adams' favourite actress! – see page 106).

But perhaps the greatest achievement of this event has been, and will continue to be, a dedicated commitment towards ensuring a high percentage of female participation. The women's prizes are the highest for any Open in the world. The top prize is now 8,000 pounds, which is 1,000 pounds higher than the third prize in the main prize list. A female player finishing high up in the Masters collects both a main prize and a women's prize! This year we were fortunate to have playing the reigning Women's World Champion, Alexandra Kosteniuk, in Gibraltar for the first time. Another very welcome first time visitor was the number two rated female in the world, India's Humpy Koneru (2614), who came to Gibraltar with her father. Other top female players included last year's winner, Nana Dzagnidze, former Women's World Champion Antoaneta Stefanova, and former European Women's Champion Pia Cramling. (Amazingly, Pia and her Spanish GM husband Juan-Manuel Bellon have played in all eight Gibtelecom Masters, and this year their daughter Anna, who is 7, debuted in two of the morning events. The only other GM to have played all eight Gibtelecom Masters is England's Jon Speelman.) However, Natalia Zhukova thoroughly deserved the top female prize. She played 8 GMs, lost only once, and scored 7/10, earning in addition a GM norm, for a TPR of 2686.

This writer has also been employed at Gibraltar for all eight editions, but as commentator! For many years we used three large demonstration boards, which meant per round I spent five or six long hours on my feet. Thankfully, those days are gone. This year, to my utter amazement (I wasn't consulted!) the Caleta Hotel built a whole new broadcasting suite, The Archie Suite, representing an investment of some 100,000 pounds, and using this new facility, and with Gibtelecom's technical expertise, we were able to provide better live game commentaries than ever before. It felt like I was hosting a chess television show, and we also incorporated an on-line chat-room feature, which proved popular. I began each day at 3 p.m., when the round started, and would try to cover 5 or 6 of the leading boards. Players would sometimes join me in the commentary room after their games, and many days I conducted interviews with special guests, such as with Gibraltar's Deputy Chief Minister, Joe Holliday, with Gibraltar's Mayor, Olga Zammitt, and with the CEO of Gibtelecom, Tim Bristow. All these interviews were broadcast live over the Internet, as were the evening master classes – special lectures from some of the top players. The Governor of Gibraltar, Sir Adrian Johns, also visited. I should mention in passing the fact that the Government of Gibraltar is itself the event's chief single sponsor, so that support for chess is not only coming from the private sector. There can be no doubt that the Festival brings great advantages to Gibraltar on all kinds of levels. For a territory of six square kilometres this is by far the single most important sporting or cultural event of the year. Gibraltar has branded itself a capital of world chess.

An early guest of mine in the commentary room was Spanish GM Manuel Rivas. He was not playing, but was visiting for the day, and it was great fun to have him alongside – we are old friends. Helping me analyse the games, at one point Manuel wrote something on a piece of paper and handed it to me, as serious and as conscientious as a newsreader might – we were, after all, live on sound and camera, both to the physical audience in the room and to the world

at large. I was intrigued, and thought perhaps that he had written down a move that we hadn't considered. When I looked down at the paper it read, 'My bus for Algeciras leaves at 22:00!'

There were two extra-special guests this year. One was Boris Spassky. I played Boris Vasilievich in a simul in London when I was twelve, and lost – he mated me. Last year he visited the Festival for a few days, and I was privileged to spend a few hours in his company. This year he stayed all ten days. He helped present prizes to some of the amateur players one afternoon, which was very entertaining to watch, and which must have been a great thrill for them.

ZELJKA MALOBABIC

Extra-special guest Magnus Carlsen arrived in Gibraltar fresh from his victory in Wijk aan Zee. Watching Tania Sachdev, Nana Dzagnidze and Dronavalli Harika play bughouse he must have felt it had been worth the trip.

Another time he went over a game with Petrosian from their 1966 World Title match – the 22nd – one Spassky lost! One afternoon he and I commentated on the live games for about three hours. Boris has many friends in Gibraltar, and he will always be welcome.

It is a sad fact of the busy chess calendar, but the start of Gibraltar and the close of Corus overlap. Thus, one cannot play both. But we were delighted this year to welcome to Gibraltar for a few days the World number 1, Magnus Carlsen, fresh from his victory in Wijk aan Zee. Magnus' sister Ingrid was playing in Gibraltar, one of some 30 Norwegians taking part. I drove from Gibraltar to Malaga late one evening – switching from commentary to chauffeuring – to meet Magnus and bring him back to the hotel. For the car stereo soundtrack on the drive back Magnus chose a Beatles CD. For die-hard fans of the Fab Four I can tell you that the song 'The Ballad Of John And Yoko' (which mentions Gibraltar in the lyrics) did not feature. Nor, I now realise, did 'Norwegian Wood'.

She told me she worked in the morning and started to laugh...

One night there was a massive storm. Windows and doors shook in their frames, the hotel heaved in time to the crashing waves, and one couple actually packed their bags, in readiness for a hasty evacuation. At breakfast the next day people spoke of nothing else. In this way the vast meteorological assault came to my notice. I had been so tired that I had slept right through it.

We had players this year from some 50 different nations. Few events outside Olympiads can match that. Many years ago, when this Festival was still in the initial planning stage, Franco Ostuni, who is the Caleta's General Manager, went with Brian Callaghan to visit the Hastings tournament in England. The two men wanted to see the famous old congress for themselves, to get an idea of what they might be getting into. What was required? In which ways could Gibraltar do better? Eight years later the Gibraltar Festival is looking stronger than ever. Hastings, meanwhile, seems to be on the brink of total collapse. The loss of that event would be a British chess tragedy. But Gibraltar, although it is played under the auspices of the English Chess Federation, has anchored itself onto the bigger world stage.

Of the top seeds this year, only Adams had been before. Bacrot, Movsesian, Vallejo, Kamsky, and Fressinet were all playing for the first time, as were many other strong GMs. We also had the participation of the sensational Cori family from Peru. Deysi is World Under-16 Girls Champion, and her brother Jorge is World Under-14 Champion. Unfortunately, most years we hear of players having visa difficulties. I heard one story of an unlucky Russian player – I forget who – being unable to travel to Gibraltar because the British Embassy in Moscow had mistakenly issued him with a visa for Belize – which used to be British Honduras. It's shocking that in the twenty-first century bureaucratic idiocy like that still exists. (Kramnik almost didn't reach London in December because of

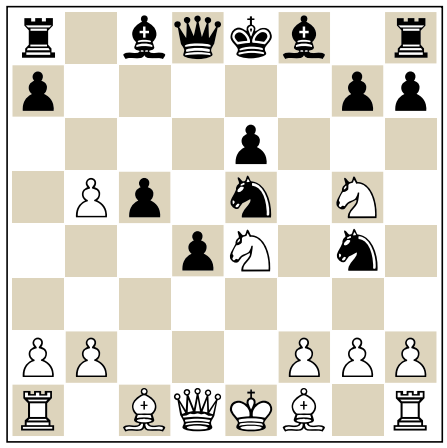
a visa problem, and Aronian, who wanted to visit, was prevented from boarding a plane that he already held a ticket for.)

It would not be out of place for a reigning Miss World to help promote an event in which women take such a lead role, and the current Miss World comes from Gibraltar! I don't know whether she plays chess or not. In any case, the tournament room was full of beauty queens, a pleasant panorama which, working downstairs in my new suite, I was prevented from viewing but able to imagine.

It is not possible here to do justice to every player or every performance. After ten rounds we finished with a staggering nine players in a tie for first on 7½ points. According to the rules of the event, the four with the highest TPRs went through into a rapid playoff phase, two semi-finals and a final, the winner to take the first prize of 15,000 pounds. The time control was 10 minutes per player, plus ten seconds increment per move. But before going on to those matches, let me show you some highlights.

BI 3.8 – E10
Vadim Malakhatko
Paco Vallejo
Gibraltar 2010 (7)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 c5 4.d5 b5 5.dxe6 fxe6 6.cxb5 d5 7.♘c3 ♘bd7 Vallejo would hardly have played the Blumenfeld without something concrete in mind. Malakhatko follows one of his own games from last year, but soon comes to grief. **8.e4 d4 9.e5 ♘g4 10.♘g5 ♘dxe5 11.♘ce4** So far we are following Malakhatko-Babujian, St Petersburg 2009. That game continued 11...♗b7 12.f4 ♗xe4 13.♘xe4 ♕d5, with great complications.



11...h6! A simple improvement. Black is already better. **12.♘f3** 12.f4 hxg5 13.fxe5 ♘xe5 14.♗xg5 ♕d5 is no better. **12...♕d5 13.♘fd2 ♗b7 14.h3** 14.♗e2 ♘f6 15.♘xf6+ gxf6 and what to do about g2? After 16.♘f3 ♖g8 White is being cut to pieces. **14...♘f6 15.♘xf6+ gxf6 16.f4?** 16.♕h5+ ♔e7! gave no respite; but 16.b3 ♖g8 17.♖g1 might have afforded some resistance.

Kaissiber on Emanuel Lasker

***Kaissiber* 36:** Peter Anderberg reviews a new work of 1,079 pages: *Emanuel Lasker: Denker, Weltenbürger, Schachweltmeister*. Hergert on From's Gambit, Larsen on Fritz Sämisch; 1. e4 c5 2. Na3; King's Gambit, etc. ***Kaissiber* 35:** „Emanuel Lasker in Köln" by Peter Anderberg; Lev Gutman on Canal's 7. Nc3!? in the Two Knights (part 2); Maurits Wind combats the Réti Opening with an early g5, and more.

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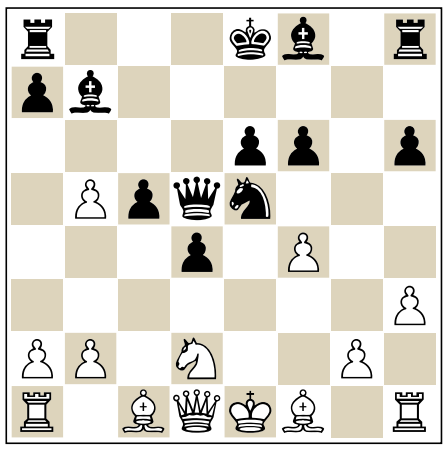
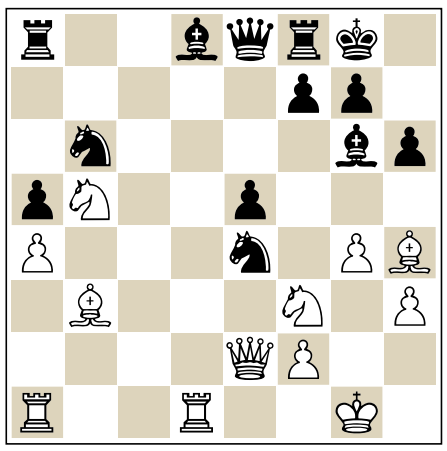
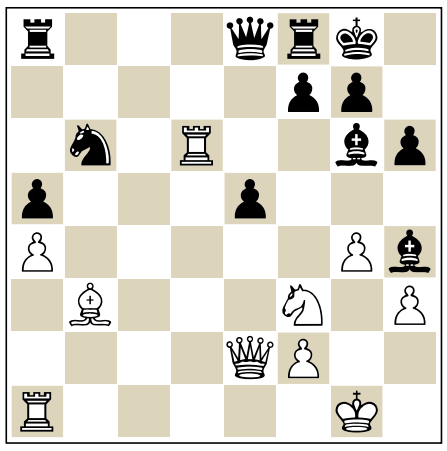


16...♘d3+! Deadly. **17.♗xd3 ♕xg2 18.♕h5+ ♔d7 19.♔d1** 19.♖f1 ♕g3+ wins. **19...♕xh1+ 20.♔c2 ♗e7 21.b3 ♖hg8 22.♗b2 ♕d5 23.f5 e5 24.♗c4 ♕g2 25.♖e1 ♔d8** An odd move, but anything will do. **26.♕f7 ♖g7 27.♕e6 ♗c8** White resigned.



Chanda-Krush
position after 23...♘xe4

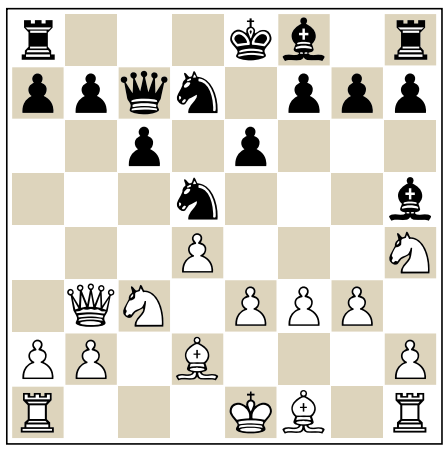
Chanda is a dangerous opponent for anybody. Look what he does to Irina Krush: **24.♘d6!** Strictly speaking, the immediate 24.♕e3! might be even better. **24...♘xd6 25.♖xd6 ♗xh4**



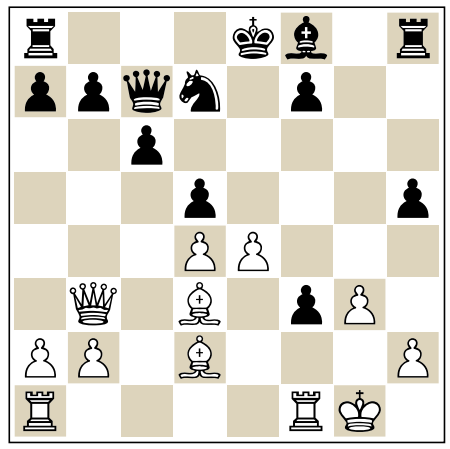
26.♖xg6! 26.♘xh4 ♗h7 27.♖xb6 ♕d8! is the surprising point – when Black survives. **26...♗f6?** 26...♗d8 was the only chance, when White has promising ways to play, but no forced win. **27.♕e3!** This switch to dark squares is killing. **27...e4** Or 27...♕c6 28.♖c1 ♕b7 29.♖xf6! gxf6 30.♘h4! and wins. **28.♖xf6! gxf6 29.♕xh6! ♕d8** 29...exf3 30.♗c2. **30.♘h4!** Black resigned.

SL 1.7 – D12
Damian Lemos
Clovis Vernay
Gibraltar 2010 (8)

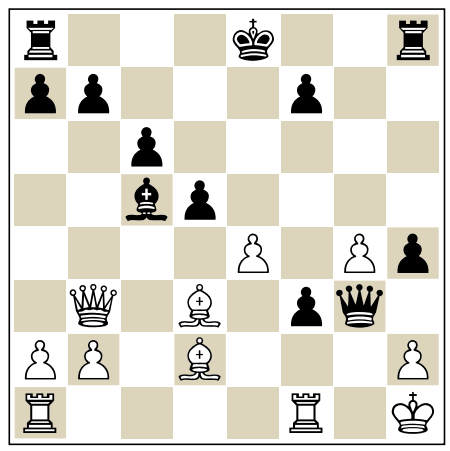
This game was one of the most spectacular in the whole event. **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 ♗f5 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘h4 ♗e4 7.f3 ♗g6 8.♕b3 ♕c7 9.♗d2 ♘bd7 10.cxd5 ♘xd5** After 10...exd5 White usually plays 11.0-0-0. **11.g3!?** 11.e4 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♗e7 13.♘xg6 hxg6 14.g3 ♖xh2 15.♖xh2 ♕xg3+ 16.♖f2 ♗h4 17.0-0-0 (17.♗e3 ♕xf3) 17...♕xf2 18.♕xb7 ♖b8 19.♕xc6, with several examples, including Kozubov-Vernay, 2009 – but with 11.g3 the young Argentine gives the game a new slant. **11...♗h5!?** Quite ambitious play.



12.♘xd5 exd5 13.♗d3 g5!? And again Black takes the bull by the horns. Safer was 13...♕b6, because if 14.♕c2, 14...g5 seems to give him a better version of the game. **14.♘f5!** 14.g4 ♗xg4 15.fxg4 gxh4 looks good for Black. **14...♗xf3 15.0-0** Now if the bishop retreats to g4 or h5 White plays 16.e4! and opens lines. Even worse is 15...♗e4??, because of 16.♗xe4 dxe4 17.♘g7+. **15...g4** It looks like a King's Gambit! **16.♘h4 h5!** Otherwise Black is just a lot worse. **17.♘xf3** 17.♖xf3? gxf3 18.♖f1 would be like climbing in through an upstairs window when the front door is unlocked. **17...gxf3 18.e4!?** 18.♖xf3 h4 19.g4 ♖g8 20.h3 looks fine to me.



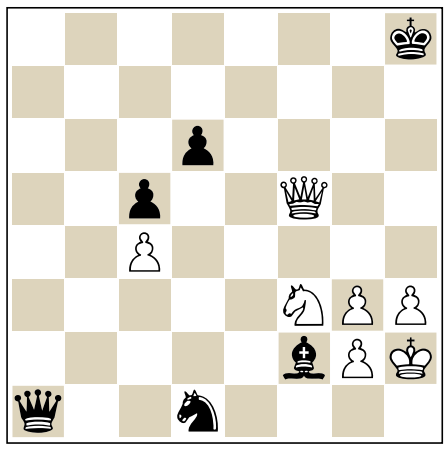
18...♘c5 A truly riotous response, which White cannot possibly have reckoned with. If the following combination worked, this game would not only have won the Best Game prize – it would have been voted by many as one of the greatest games in history. Sadly, there is a single flaw. After 18...h4 White doubtless intended 19.exd5! hxg3 20.♖ae1+ (or 20.♖xf3 g2 21.♖e1+ ♔d8 22.h3, which looks excellent for White) 20...♔d8 21.♖xf3, when after 21...♗g7!? it is hard to say what is happening! **19.dxc5 ♗xc5+ 20.♔h1 h4 21.g4** It looks as if Black has lost his mind. Isn't he just a piece down? 21.♗f4?? hxg3. **21...♕g3!**



ZELJKA MALOBABIC

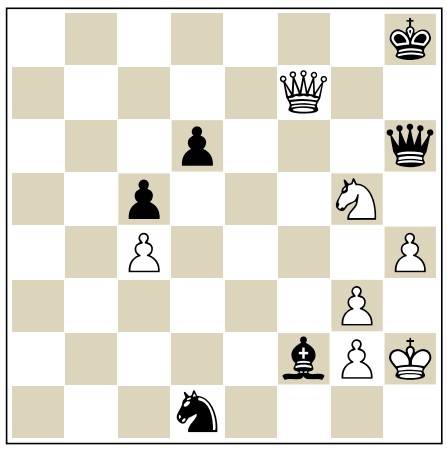
Two more extra-special guests, 10th World Champion Boris Spassky and Women World Champion Alexandra Kosteniuk sit down for a brief off-hand game.

An astonishing concept, which so nearly works. **22.♖g1 ♗d6!** You have to feel sorry for Clovis Vernay. He is standing here on the brink of immortality. **23.e5! ♗xe5** 23...♕xe5? would work if the king were, say, on f8. **24.♖xg3 hxg3 25.♗h7!** This is the fly in the ointment. Now 25...g2+ 26.♔g1 ♗d4+ 27.♗e3 doesn't work. **25...♖xh7 26.♕xf3** And, with two line-freeing moves (23.e5! and 25.♗h7!) that seem to come straight out of a composed problem, White defuses the bomb. **26...♖xh2+ 27.♔g1 0-0-0** 27...♖xd2 28.♕e3. **28.♕f5+ ♖d7 29.♕xe5 ♖xd2 30.♖e1** Black resigned.



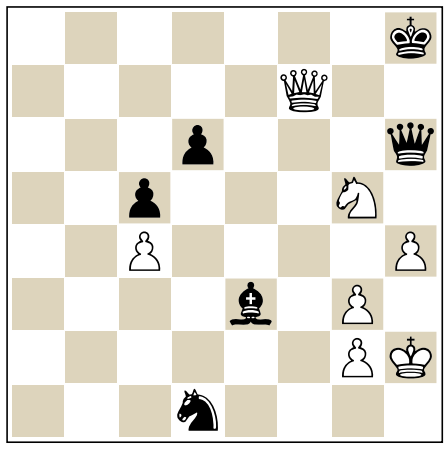
Cheparinov-Havik
position after 43...♘d1

This game was watched by a huge audience on-line. Victor Havik, rated just 2093, was putting up heroic resistance against his illustrious 2660 opponent. We join the action shortly after the first time control. **44.♕f8+ ♔h7 45.♕f7+?** 45.♘g5+ ♔g6 46.h4! ♗xg3+ 47.♔xg3 ♕e5+ 48.♕f4 should win for White. **45...♕g7!** 45...♔h6? 46.g4; 45...♔h8? 46.♘g5. **46.♕h5+** 46.♘g5+ ♔h6 is not dangerous. **46...♕h6** 46...♔g8? 47.♕d5+ picks up the knight. **47.♘g5+ ♔g7 48.♕f7+ ♔h8 49.h4**



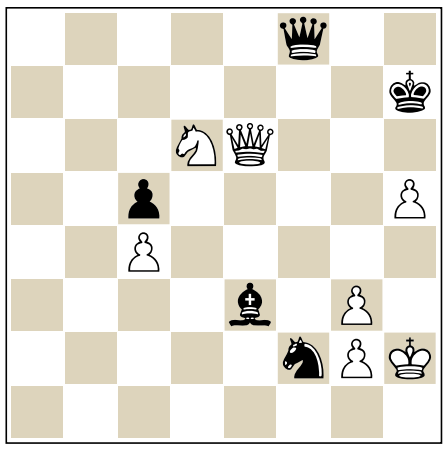
49...♗e3! The tempting 49...♘e3? walks, like Alice, into a 'looking-glass' refutation: 50.♕xf2! ♘g4+ 51.♔g1 only this square will do!

51...♘xf2 52.♘f7+ ♔g7 53.♘xh6 and White wins – a delightful mirror variation. **50.♕e8+ ♔g7 51.♕e7+ ♔g8 52.♕f7+ ♔h8**



53.♕e8+ ♔g7 Poor Ivan was using all his time trying to find a win. Finally he goes for a zigzag, or 'staircase' solution. **54.♕d7+ ♔g8 55.♕c8+ ♕f8!** 55...♔g7 56.♕b7+! ♔g8 (56...♔f6?? 57.♕f7+ ♔e5 58.♘f3+ ♔e4 59.♕d5 is mate) 57.♕d5+ – Look again at White's manoeuvre: ♕f7-e8-d7-c8-b7-d5, each time with check! – 57...♔g7 and here things are still far from clear, since the obvious 58.♕xd1 ♗xg5 59.♕g4 only leads to a drawn pawn ending. Instead White should try 58.♘e6+ ♔h7 although after 59.♕xd6 ♘f2 Black looks to be okay. **56.♕e6+ ♔h8!** 56...♔g7?! 57.♕d7+ ♔g6 58.♕h7+ feels risky for Black. **57.♘f7+ ♔h7!** The Norwegian finds the right square each time. Not 57...♔g7? because of the check on f5 after 58.♘xd6. **58.♘xd6** 58.h5 ♕g7! doesn't bring White concrete results. **58...♘f2!** This is good, but there was also 58...♕f1! after which White must content himself with a draw. **59.♕d7+ ♔g6 60.♕e6+ ♔h7** Time control safely reached, White now had a small think. Just before he played his move I spotted the amazing finish which could now happen. The tension of waiting was almost too much to bear. In the commentary room we had a big crowd watching. When Cheparinov finally played his

move I could only hold my breath. Would Havik notice the magical way to draw? **61.h5**



61...♕xd6!! A position to keep framed on the wall and show one's grandchildren. **62.♕xd6 ♘g4+ 63.♔h3 ♘f2+ 64.♔h2 ♘g4+ 65.♔h3 ♘f2+ 66.♔h4 ♗g5+!** Draw agreed. For this effort I awarded the two players the shared Best Game prize. It is a wonderful finish. The colossal difference in the players' ratings lends it an extra dramatic flourish.

Which takes us to the four rapid play-off semi-finalists:
Sandipan Chanda v *Paco Vallejo*
Both of these delight in enterprising, dynamic chess. In Vallejo's game with Harika it took three draw offers before they agreed peace. In the first game of this match, Chanda, in a level position but playing his moves too fast, blundered, and Vallejo converted the point. The second game was even crazier. After various adventures Chanda reached a dead won ending, but blundered horribly, and drew. Vallejo reached the final.

Michael Adams v *Jan Gustafsson*
Over the first ten rounds here only once, briefly, did Adams lose some control: this was in his game with Natalia Zhukova, when a promising middlegame evaporated into a draw. Several of his wins were sparkling. Gustafsson started strongly and kept going, ending with two Whites (and two quick draws) to seal his play-off spot. In Game 1 of their match Adams was surprisingly well beaten. In Game 2, needing to win at all costs, the Englishman did not look well placed, but from a dubious position he managed to get back into the game and score the required win. They now had to play a single Armageddon game, 6 minutes v 5, White (Adams) having to win. In a tense game, as Adams was taking the upper hand, Gustafsson seemed to blunder the exchange. After that there was really only one result on the table. Adams won.

The Final:
Paco Vallejo v *Michael Adams*
Spain versus Britain, fought in Gibraltar! This was, all things considered, a fitting final pairing, and an eager audience packed into the commentary room. On-line the numbers peaked. Spanish chess journalist Leontxo Garcia came and sat with me. In this way this historic clash was provided with a joint Anglo-Hispanic commentary team! As it turned out, the final was a little disappointing. Adams dominated. In the first game he seized on an error and never gave Vallejo another chance. In Game 2 Vallejo got nothing from the opening, and then tried a flimsy-looking piece sacrifice for two pawns. The writing was on the wall. Then, when all seemed hopeless for White, the game almost caught fire. With so much at stake, and only needing to draw, Adams stumbled a little, though in truth it would have taken a miracle for Vallejo to win the game. Finally they repeated moves, and Adams was declared the winner.

This year I was Master of Ceremonies at the closing gala banquet, a dangerous appointment because it meant that for a long time I had total control of the microphone. Other speakers followed. Several important announcements were made. One was that Gibtelecom, who have invested over 350,000 pounds in this event in the past 8 years, remain absolutely key and major supporters, but the lead sponsor will now change to Tradewise, a motor insurance firm based on The Rock.

Chess in Gibraltar is taught in most of the schools. Stephen Whatley, a local junior, got to analyse and play a friendly game with Boris Spassky. He is two years younger than I was when I played Boris.

Brian Callaghan, coming to the stage after the prize-giving, made an entirely appropriate presentation to Gibtelecom, in recognition of their tireless support, of a beautiful antique Jaques chess set, a fact which, by association, provides a curious end to my article. A search engine set to 'antique chess sets Jaques' brought me a link to Lewis Carroll, who, I learned, owned a travelling set made by that firm. Becoming interested, I read that in the 1872 reprint of *Through The Looking Glass* (first published one year earlier) '...the White Kings disappeared from the diagram without Lewis Carroll or anyone else noticing.' The book, of course, opens with a chess position, and the classic tale follows Alice as she moves across the chessboard until, at the end, she herself becomes a Queen.

But wait a minute. What year was that? 1872? The White Kings disappeared in 1872? That was the year of the fateful voyage of the *Mary Celeste*! Is it possible that the ten people on board fell through the Looking Glass?

We finish with a game of the overall winner and one of the top lady.

NOTES BY

Michael Adams

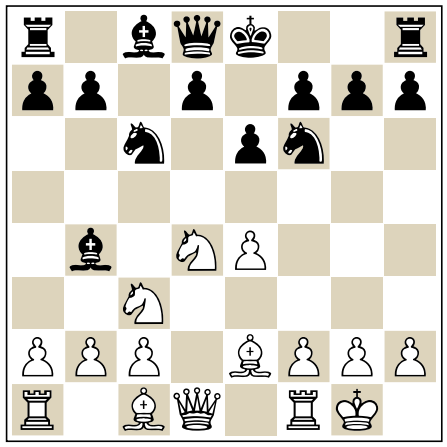
SI 34.2 – B45
Michael Adams
Stelios Halkias
Gibraltar 2010 (3)

This was my most interesting game in Gibraltar. It is worth mentioning that I was impressed by my opponent's calculation in a difficult defensive situation and several of the variations below reflect his contributions to the post mortem.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 ♘c6

This line was unexpected but fortunately I had checked it before the tournament and was able to employ a variation I had not used before.

6.♗e2 ♗b4 7.0-0



7...0-0

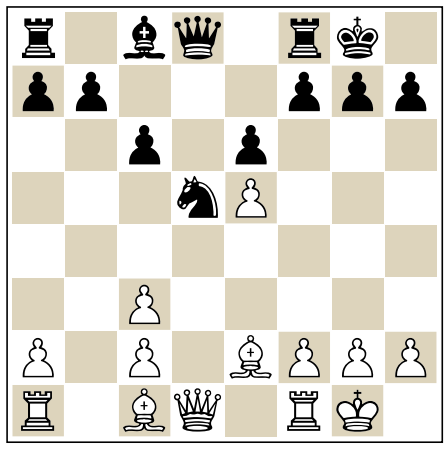
Halkias's resolve fails him and he refrains from the theoretical 7...♗xc3 8.bxc3 ♘xe4 due to the common problem of inadequate analysis recall.

8.♘xc6 dxc6 9.e5

Now Black will have difficulties introducing his light-squared bishop into the action.

9...♗xc3 10.bxc3 ♘d5

A combative option, it looks dangerous to keep the queens on the board, due to the vulnerable dark squares, but things prove to be not so simple.



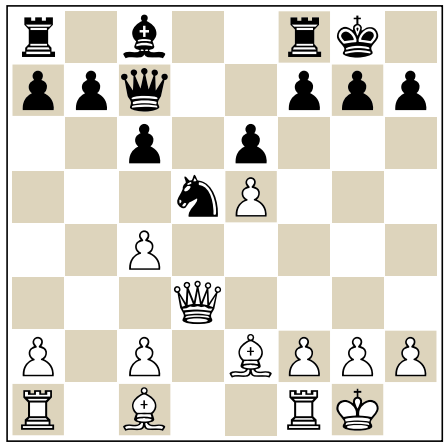
11.♕d3

My immediate intention was 11.♗d3, but I wasn't sure about 11...f5 12.exf6 ♕xf6 13.♕h5 h6. Now 14.c4 ♕xa1 15.♗xh6 looked tempting but after 15...♕d4 White has to scramble for a draw with 16.♗h7+ ♔h8 17.♗d3.

11...♕c7

This allows my initiative to gather momentum. 11...c5 12.♕g3 ♘e7 13.♗d3 limits White's edge.

12.c4



12...♘b4

Of course my opponent was intending 12...♕xe5, and I think it was a better move, but 13.cxd5 ♕xa1 14.♗a3 is tricky. We were both focused on 14...♕f6 15.♗xf8 ♔xf8, when White has a pleasant choice between 16.dxc6 bxc6 17.♖b1 or 16.d6 ♗d7 17.♕xh7 ♕h6 18.♕d3.

However the computer points out that 14...♕e5 is also playable: 15.♗xf8 ♔xf8 16.dxc6 g6 17.♗f3

ZELJKA MALOBABIC

Following a massive tie for first (a staggering 9 players scored 7½ points) Michael Adams won the rapid play-off to become the 2010 Gibtelecom champion.

bxc6 18.♗xc6 ♖b8 19.♕a3+ ♔g7 20.♕xa7 is a safe if unexciting option. The more enterprising 16.f4 ♕xd5 17.♕xh7 ♕d4+ 18.♔h1 g6 19.♖d1 ♕f6 doesn't seem to break Black's defences.

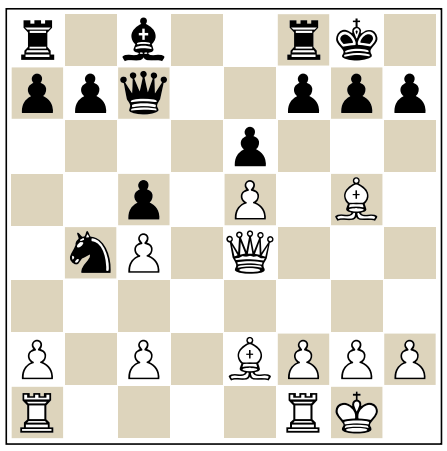
13.♕e4

My opponent had underestimated the strength of my queen occupying this powerful post.

13...c5 14.♗g5

I wanted more than 14.c3 ♘c6 15.♗d3 g6 16.♖e1 f5 17.exf6 ♖xf6, but a better way to carry out the same idea is 14.a3 ♘c6 15.♗d3 g6 16.♖e1 f5 17.exf6 ♖xf6 18.♗b2, when White benefits from the long diagonal remaining open.

My move is very aggressive, aiming for ♗f6 sacrifices, but there are significant defensive resources available.



14...b6

It was hard to choose between this and the alternative 14...♗d7 15.a3 ♗c6 16.♕g4 f5 (16...♕xe5 17.♗f4 ♕e4 18.axb4 f5 19.♕f3 wins a piece) 17.exf6 ♘xc2 18.♖ad1 (18.♖a2 ♘d4 19.♗f4 ♕f7 20.♗e5 is also interesting) 18...♘d4 19.♗d3, with a white advantage.

Attacking the knight with the other pawn is also reasonable: 15.c3 ♗c6 16.♕f4 ♘a6 leaves Black's knight offside. Another option, 16.♕g4, enables Black to use the resource 16...♕xe5 17.cxb4 f5, picking up one of White's bishops, although his position looks balanced on a precipice after 18.♕h5 g6 19.♕h4 ♕xe2 20.b5.

15.a3

I was initially impressed by 15.♗f6 gxf6 16.exf6 ♔h8 17.♕xa8, as the undefended black rook prevents him from developing the bishop immediately. However, 17...♖g8 solves that problem and creates a rather unpleasant threat against g2. 18.♗f3 ♘xc2 doesn't look very clear, with the black knight heading for d4.

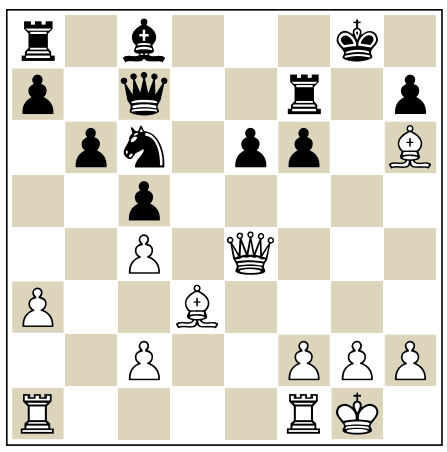
During the game we both thought that 15.c3 ♗b7 16.♕g4 ♕xe5 17.cxb4 f5 regained the piece without serious problems, but in fact 18.♕h5 g6 19.♕h4 ♕xe2 20.♗h6 keeps an edge, as Black will have to give up the exchange.

I didn't consider taking the rook – although not in the spirit of the position it is possible: 15.♕xa8 ♗b7 16.♕xa7 ♖a8 17.♗d8 ♖xd8 18.♗f3 is the tactical justification. The calm 15...♘c6 is better: 16.♗e7 ♘xe7 enables White to extricate the queen, but Black will pick up a pawn to only stand a little worse.

15...♘c6

I was expecting 15...♗b7 16.♕g4 f5 (16...♕xe5 17.♗f4 still wins the knight) 17.exf6 ♘xc2 18.♖ad1 ♘d4 19.♗d3, although White is doing well after 19...♕f7 20.f3.

16.♗d3 f5 17.exf6 gxf6 18.♗h6 ♖f7



Black's pawn cover has been stripped away from the kingside, but his pieces are able to cover the holes for a while. We had both spent a reasonable portion of our time earlier so we swiftly headed down the critical line.

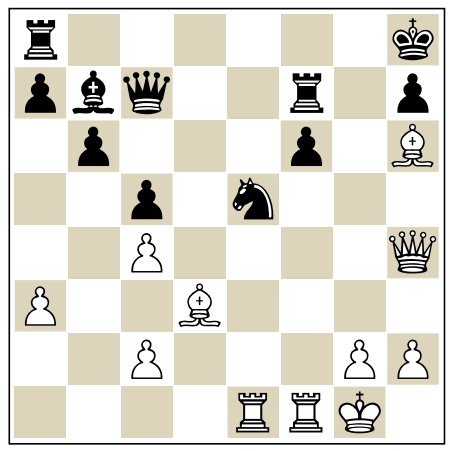
19.♖ae1 ♔h8

If 19...f5 20.♕h4 e5 21.♗e2 the threat of ♗h5 is difficult to meet.

20.♕h4 e5 21.f4 ♗b7 22.fxe5

The forcing line is good, however, 22.♗e4 was a simple but strong way to continue.

22...♘xe5



23.♗xh7

Giving up the bishop was always my idea as taking the pawn with 23.♖xf6 ♖g8 looked very hazardous, but 24.♖e2 (the blunder 24.♖xe5 ♕xe5 25.♖xf7 ♕a1+ allows Black to deliver mate) 24...♘f3+ 25.♖xf3 ♗xf3 enables White to make the killer retreat 26.♗d2, and the vulnerable dark squares have the final say.

23...♔xh7 24.♖e3

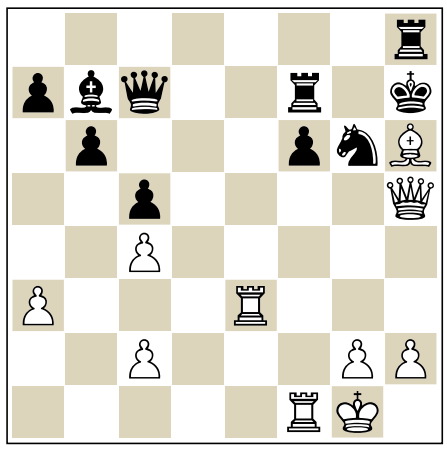
I initially thought 24.♗g5+ ♔g8 25.♗xf6 would be enough to finish the game, but with two precise defensive moves – 25...♖g7 26.♗xg7 ♕xg7 27.♕h3 ♖f8 – Black solves all his problems. Instead, 24.♖xf6 is possible: 24...♖xf6 25.♗g5+ ♔g8 26.♗xf6 ♕h7 leaves White with a couple of extra pawns but still some work to do. As Black's king can't run away, improving the position of my rook before starting checking is even better.

24...♘g6

If 24...♖h8 now my intention 25.♖h3 ♔g8 26.♖g3+ ♖g7 27.♖xf6 ♕e7 28.♖xg7+ ♕xg7 29.♖f8+ ♕xf8 30.♕g3+ is good enough. The computer points out 25.♗f4+ ♔g8 26.♖g3+ ♖g7 27.♕xf6 is also winning.

25.♕h5 ♖h8

After 25...♕d7 the quiet move 26.♖fe1 is most effective (26.♗g5+ ♔g8 27.♕xg6+ ♖g7 28.♕xf6 ♕g4 29.♖g3 ♕d4+ 30.♕xd4 cxd4 is also not bad) 26...♕d4 (26...♗c6 27.♖g3) 27.♗g5+ ♔g7 28.♕h6+ ♔g8 29.c3.



26.♖e8

I was rather pleased with this move, changing tack from the idea of transferring the rook along the third rank, and thought this was the only way to win, but there are more good options than I realised. I correctly rejected 26.♖h3 ♕e5 and 26.♖g3 ♗e4, although 27.♖f4 ♕e5 28.♕xe5 fxe5 29.♖xf7+ ♔xh6 30.♖h3+ ♔g5 31.♖xh8 ♘xh8 32.♖xa7 keeps some advantage.

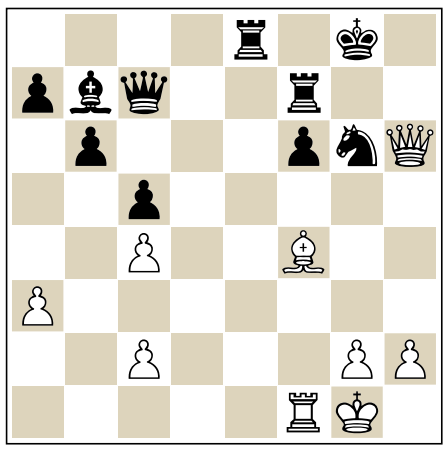
These variations show why the calm 26.♖fe1 is very effective, covering key defensive squares on the e-file, still it is surprising how calmly nudging the rook onto the open file causes a collapse of Black's position. The threat of ♖g3 is unstoppable.

Another more direct rook move also does the job: 26.♖e6 targeting f6 can only be met by a forcing line: 26...♕d7 27.♗f8+ ♔g8 28.♕xg6+ ♔xf8 29.♖exf6 ♕d4+ 30.♔h1 and desperado checks don't help: 30...♗xg2+ 31.♔xg2 ♕d2+ 32.♖1f2.

26...♖xe8 27.♗f4+ ♔g7

Luring my queen to a slightly worse square in comparison to 27...♔g8 28.♗xc7.

28.♕h6+ ♔g8



29.♗xc7

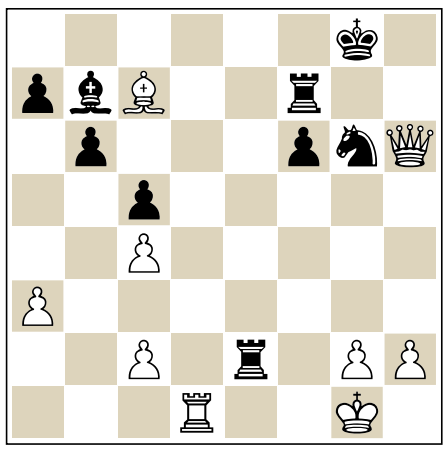
Taking a rook and knight with check is normally a good idea, but here 29.♕xg6+ ♖g7 30.♕xe8+ ♔h7 31.♗g3 (31.♕h5+ ♔g8 32.♗xc7 ♖xg2+ 33.♔h1 ♖f2+ is a draw) isn't wise – Black can even play the cheeky 31...♕e5.

29...♖e2

If 29...♖g7 the cold-blooded 30.♖xf6 is perfectly safe.

30.♖f2 ♖e1+ 31.♖f1 ♖e2 32.♖d1

After a repetition to move closer to the time control, this rook move is decisive. Black's forces aren't coordinated enough to seriously threaten my king.



32...♖xg2+

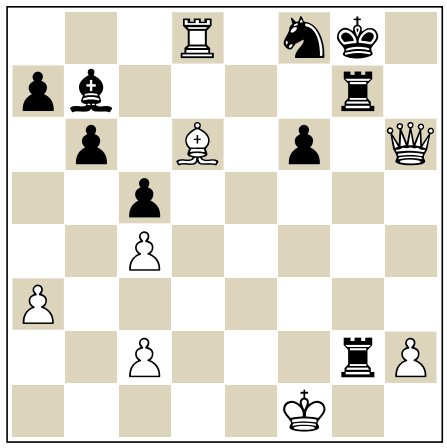
Now 32...♖g7 33.♔f1 forces the rook back.

33.♔f1 ♖g7

The computer points out that the stronger 33...♗e4 34.♖d8+ ♖f8 35.♖xf8+ ♘xf8 would have kept the game going but not changed the result.

34.♖d8+ ♘f8 35.♗d6

I can happily ignore the checks, as they only drive White's king to safety.



35...♖g1+ 36.♔e2 ♖7g2+ 37.♔d3 ♖d1+ 38.♔c3

Black resigned.

NOTES BY

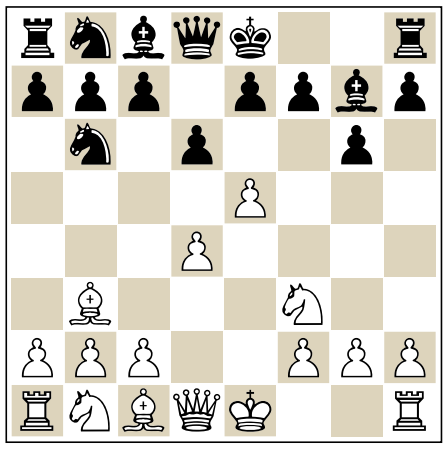
Natalia Zhukova

AL 11.9 – B04
Michael Adams
Natalia Zhukova
Gibraltar 2010 (7)

If in January you are freezing in Europe, this is the right time to pack your bags and set off to Gibraltar, where there is not only wonderful weather and the charming monkeys running around the streets, but there are excellent conditions and the biggest prize-fund for women in an open tournament. And all this is thanks to the continuous inspiration behind this tournament, Brian Callaghan, to whom I should like to take the opportunity to send my warm greetings! I was able to post a 2686 performance, achieve once again (for the 7th time, to be precise) the GM norm (but I am short of the 2500 rating for the awarding of the title) and in general to demonstrate a reasonable quality of play. I have chosen a game where I was on the verge of defeat, but it was all the more pleasant to hold out against a top-class super-grandmaster, af-

ter demonstrating colossal tenacity in defence.

1.e4 ♘f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.d4 d6 4.♘f3 g6 5.♗c4 ♘b6 6.♗b3 ♗g7



7.♕e2

Another plan involves the immediate 7.♘g5 e6 (7...0-0?! 8.e6) 8.f4 (or 8.♕f3 0-0 9.♕h3 h6 10.♘f3 dxe5 11.dxe5 ♘c6 12.♗xh6 ♘xe5 13.♗xg7 ♘xf3+ 14.♕xf3 ♔xg7 with equality, Muzychuk-Reinderman, Wijk aan Zee 2010) 8...dxe5 9.dxe5 ♕xd1+ 10.♔xd1 ♗d7 11.♘c3 ♗c6 12.♘ge4 ♘8d7 13.♗e3, Sutovsky-Reinderman, Wijk aan Zee 2010.

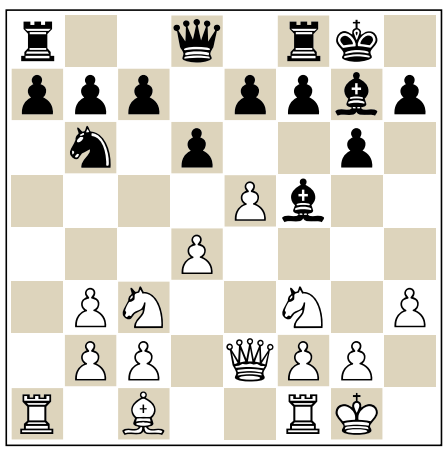
7...0-0 8.h3

8.0-0 is inaccurate, as it allows 8...♗g4, when Black's opening problems are solved, as, for example, in the game Kovalevskaya-Zhukova, Krasnoturinsk 2004: 9.♗f4 ♘c6 10.c3 ♗xf3 11.♕xf3 dxe5 12.dxe5 ♘xe5.

8...♘c6 9.0-0 ♘a5

Black fails to equalize with the exchanging operation 9...a5 10.a4 dxe5 11.dxe5 ♘d4 12.♘xd4 ♕xd4 13.♖e1 ♗d7 14.♘c3, Leko-Timman, Wijk aan Zee 1996.

10.♘c3 ♘xb3 11.axb3 ♗f5



ZELJKA MALOBABIC

Top lady Natalia Zhukova posted a 2686 performance. 'But, of course, a 2600+ player, against a woman, will always play on to the end...'

12.♘e4

I based my preparation on the game Svidler-De Firmian, KasparovChess GP 2000: 12.♖d1 c6 13.♗g5 ♕d7 14.♘e4 f6 15.♗f4, and here Black could have played the stronger 15...fxe5 16.dxe5 ♗xh3.

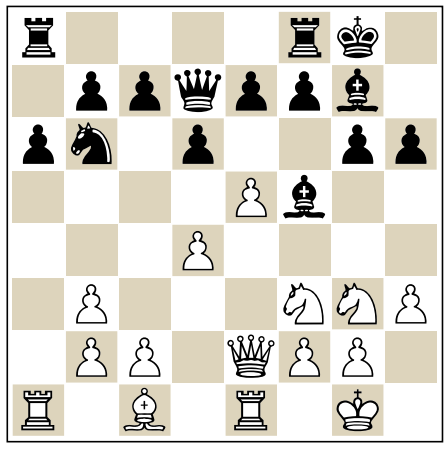
12...♕d7

In this version I considered f7-f6 to be incorrect, although Beliavsky played this against Lenic in 2003 at the Vidmar Memorial: 12...f6 13.♘g3 fxe5 14.dxe5 dxe5, and now 15.♘xf5! (but not 15.♘xe5 ♗xc2 with an acceptable game) 15...♖xf5 16.♖d1 ♕f8 17.♕e4 c6 18.c4 with advantage to White.

13.♘g3 a6

Here I thought for 20 minutes, trying to guess which was better, a7-a6 or a7-a5 ☺, and after deciding that pawns can't move backwards, I moved it to a6.

14.♖e1 h6



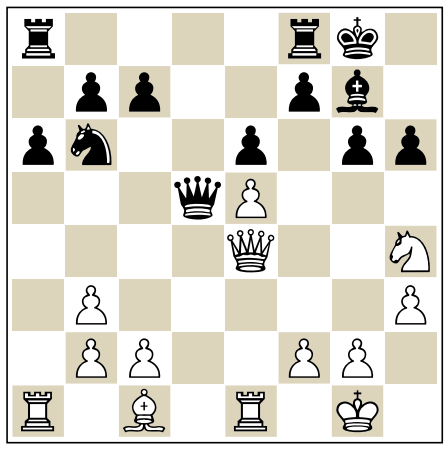
15.♘h4

A poor move, in my view. Perhaps Michael underestimated my reply. I consider 15.c4 to be the logical continuation for an advantage, and although Black's position is very solid, some difficulties are experienced: 15...d5 (bad is 15...g5? because of 16.h4; and White has an edge after 15...dxe5 16.♘xe5 ♕xd4 17.♘xf5 gxf5 18.♘f3 ♕e4 19.♕xe4 fxe4 20.♖xe4) 16.c5 ♘c8 17.♘xf5 ♕xf5 18.c6 bxc6 19.♖xa6 ♖xa6 20.♕xa6 with a white plus.

15...e6! 16.♘e4

White is not able to trap the bishop: 16.♘f1 dxe5 17.dxe5 ♕c6 18.♘e3 ♖ad8 19.g4 ♗e4 20.♘c4 (20.f3 g5) 20...♘xc4 21.bxc4 g5.

16...♗xe4 17.♕xe4 dxe5 18.dxe5 ♕d5 19.♕e2 ♕b5 20.♕e4 ♕d5



Up to this point I was very happy with my position. I was thinking how comfortably I had equalized with black and that objectively White should repeat moves. But, of course, a 2600+ player, against a woman, will always play on to the end...

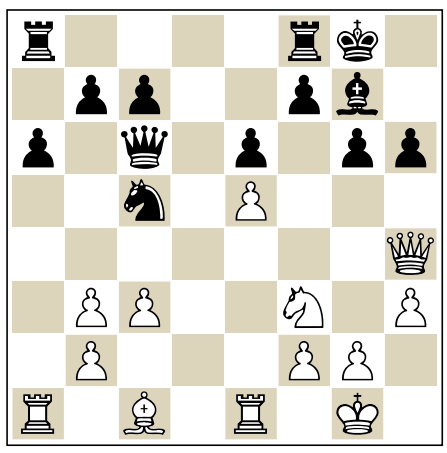
21.♕g4 ♕c6

I shouldn't have removed the pressure on the e5-point, since it is not easy for White to coordinate his pieces after 21...♘d7 22.♘f3.

22.c3 ♘d7

Interesting was 22...♕b5!? 23.b4 ♖ad8 24.♘f3 ♕c4 25.♘d4 ♘d5.

23.♘f3 ♘c5 24.♕h4!

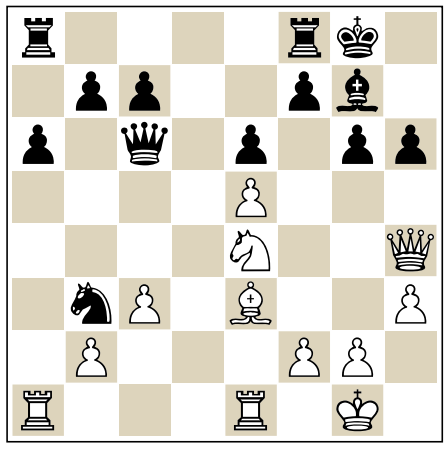


24...♘d3?

It was not through choice that I decided to win the exchange, since for some reason other ways of defending the h6 pawn did not appeal to me, and I decided that I would suffer but at least be the exchange up.

I would have lost quickly after 24...g5 25.♗xg5 hxg5 26.♘xg5 ♖fd8 27.♕h7+ ♔f8 28.♕h5 ♖d7 29.♘h7+ ♔e8 30.♕g4.

After 24...♔h7 I did not like 25.♗e3 ♘xb3 26.♘g5+ ♔g8 27.♘e4 with a strong attack, for example:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

A) 27...♘xa1 28.♗xh6 ♖fd8 29.♗g5 ♖d3 30.♘f6+ ♔f8 31.♕h7 and wins;

B) 27...g5 28.♗xg5 hxg5 29.♘xg5 ♖fd8 30.♖a4! ♖d7 31.♕h7+ ♔f8 32.♖f4 and White wins.

Only 24...h5 does not lose immediately, after 25.♗g5 ♘xb3 26.♖ad1. Of course, White has solid compensation for the pawn, but there is still all to play for and this is what I should have done.

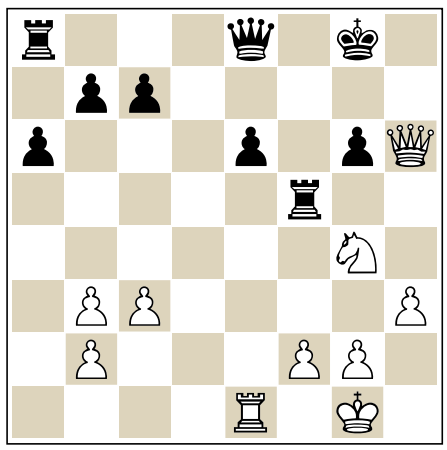
25.♗xh6 ♘xe1 26.♖xe1 f6

The only move.

27.exf6 ♖xf6 28.♘e5

White could have gone into a rook endgame with an extra pawn by 28.♗xg7 ♔xg7 29.♘g5 ♖h8 30.♕d4 ♖e8 31.♕e5 ♕d6 32.♕xf6+ ♔xf6 33.♘e4+ ♔f5 34.♘xd6+ cxd6, but Mickey probably thought that this was too small an achievement.

28...♕e8 29.♘g4 ♖f5 30.♗xg7 ♔xg7 31.♕h6+ ♔g8



32.♖e5?!

Up to this point White has con-

Gibraltar 2010

				TPR
1	Adams	ENG 2694	7½	2764
2	Vallejo	ESP 2705	7½	2726
3	Gustafsson	GER 2627	7½	2769
4	Chanda	IND 2622	7½	2720
5	Kamsky	USA 2693	7½	2719
6	Bacrot	FRA 2713	7½	2713
7	Movsesian	SVK 2708	7½	2708
8	Gopal	IND 2584	7½	2656
9	Lenderman	USA 2560	7½	2652
10	Zhukova	UKR 2462	7	2686
11	Fressinet	FRA 2670	7	2666
12	Koneru	IND 2614	7	2663
13	Halkias	GRE 2566	7	2630
14	Hoffmann	GER 2508	7	2630
15	Malakhatko	BEL 2549	7	2590
16	Cheparinov	BUL 2660	7	2568
17	Istratescu	ROU 2607	7	2554
18	Speelman	ENG 2525	7	2551
19	Boskovic	SRB 2454	7	2506
20	Guliyev	AZE 2516	7	2505
21	Stefanova	BUL 2545	6½	2614
22	Fridman	GER 2654	6½	2613
23	Bindrich	GER 2512	6½	2583
24	Cramling	SWE 2528	6½	2546
25	Hirneise	GER 2421	6½	2541
26	Naumann	GER 2525	6½	2535
27	Javakhishvili	GEO 2493	6½	2535
28	Shankland	USA 2491	6½	2535
29	Kosteniuk	RUS 2523	6½	2519
30	Lemos	ARG 2556	6½	2491
31	Dzagnidze	GEO 2506	6½	2488
32	Harika	IND 2471	6½	2478
33	Bhat	USA 2540	6½	2477
34	Cmilyte	LTU 2489	6½	2445
35	Siebrecht	GER 2468	6½	2427
36	Sarkar	USA 2378	6½	2408
37	Cori	PER 2412	6½	2393
38	Karavade	IND 2405	6½	2360
39	Reizniece	LAT 2341	6½	2359
40	Nezad	QAT 2408	6½	2312
41	Dworakowska	POL 2374	6½	2273

224 players, 10 rounds

ducted the attack accurately, but here it was stronger to play 32.h4 ♕f7 (32...♖d8 33.h5 and White is winning) 33.♕e3 ♔h7 34.♘h6 ♕g7 35.♘xf5 exf5 36.h5 with a winning advantage for White.

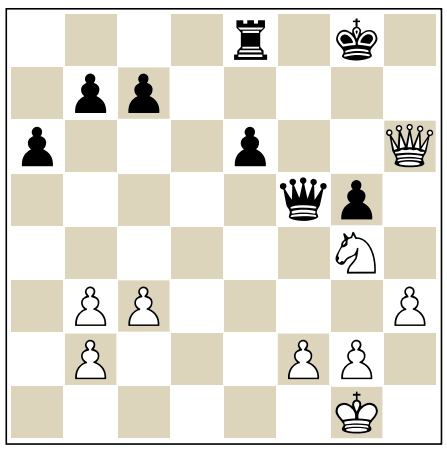
32...♕f7 33.♕h4

Here 33.♖e4 was very strong, admitting his mistake on the last move, when Black is powerless against the threat of ♕e3: 33...♖f8 34.♕e3 ♕g7 35.♖xe6 ♔h7 with a clear advantage for White.

33...g5

It would have been better to play 33...♔g7 34.♘h6, but during the game I overlooked 34...♖f4! 35.♘g4 ♖h8 36.♕g3 ♖f5 37.♕e3 ♖xe5 38.♕xe5+ ♔h7 39.♘f6+ ♔h6 40.h4 ♖f8 41.g4 with only a small advantage for White.

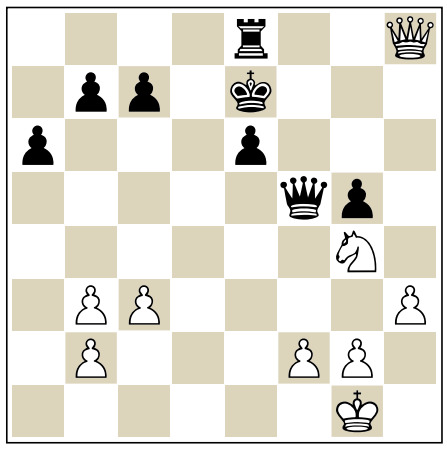
34.♕h6 ♖e8 35.♖xf5 ♕xf5



36.♕h5?

With 3-4 minutes on his clock, Michael did not notice the defence ♔f8, otherwise he would have gone into a queen endgame with an extra pawn: 36.♘f6+ ♔f7 37.♘xe8 ♔xe8 with good winning chances.

36...♔f8 37.♕h8+ ♔e7



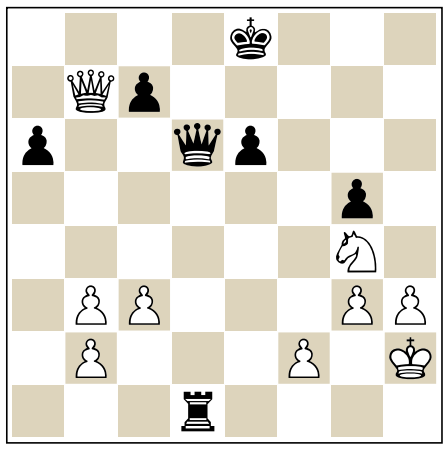
38.♕d4?!

More problems would have been set by 38.♕g7+ ♔d6 (38...♔d8? 39.♘f6 winning) 39.♕d4+ ♔e7 (39...♕d5? 40.♘f6) 40.♕b4+ ♔d8 41.♕xb7 ♕b5 42.♕a8+ ♔e7 43.♕f3 ♕xb3 44.♕f6+ ♔d6 45.♕g6 ♖b8 46.♕d3+ ♕d5 47.♕xa6+ ♔e7, but with accurate defence Black is alright.

38...♖d8

Black cannot hold on to the pawn: 38...a5?! 39.♕g7+ ♔d6 40.♘e3 ♕b1+ 41.♔h2 b5 42.♕xg5 ♖b8 43.♕f6 ♕e4, or 38...b6?! 39.♘e5.

39.♕b4+ ♔e8 40.♕xb7 ♖d1+ 41.♔h2 ♕f4+ 42.g3 ♕d6

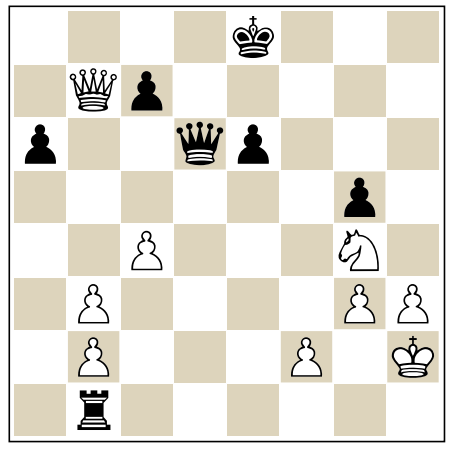


43.c4

Here I thought for about half an hour, trying to decide whether I had a plan to play for a win (which greatly amused my husband Alexander Grischuk, when I told him about this after the game; he rightly thought that a draw was the limit of Black's dreams), and after failing to find anything I went in for a variation that forces a draw.

A draw would also have been the result after 43.♕e4 ♔d8 44.b4 ♕d5 45.♘f6 ♕xe4 46.♘xe4 ♔e7 (46...♖b1 47.♘xg5 ♖xb2 48.♔g2 ♔e7 49.♘e4 would be a bit better for White) 47.♔g2 ♖b1 48.♔f3 ♖xb2 49.♔e3.

43...♖b1



44.♕e4 Or 44.b4 ♕d1 (44...♖xb2? 45.c5) 45.♕c8+ ♔f7 46.♕xc7+ ♔g6 47.♘e5+ ♔f5 48.g4+ ♔e4 49.♕c6+ ♔xe5 50.♕c5+ ♔f6 51.♕f8+, with a draw.

44...♕d1 45.♕xe6+ ♔d8 46.♕f6+ ♔c8 47.♕xa6+ ♔b8 48.♕b5+ ♔a7 49.♕a4+ ♔b8 50.♕b5+ ♔a7 51.♕c5+ ♔b8 52.♕b5+

Draw.

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VLADIMIR BARSKY

Vladimir Barsky on Konstantin Chernyshov: 'If all communists were like him I'd probably apply to join the Russian Communist Party.'

toriums – about 200 more people than a year ago, although the prize fund was reduced from seven million to five million rubles (for reference, one euro is worth approximately 42-43 rubles). As a mass festival we can already compare it with Wijk aan Zee, all that's left is to set it up as our super-tournament. It's quite possible that the first round-robin could take place as early as January-February 2011. It would probably be a little more modest than category 18-19, but then Moscow wasn't built in a day, either.

By the way, we have a substantial advantage over Wijk aan Zee: there for three euros you can eat a bowl of pea soup and for the same money you can have a full lunch in the student canteen: starter, main course, salad and compote plus a roll. True, there's a very strict smoking ban across the whole RSSU campus – students are dismissed from the institution for this, and chess players are kicked out of the tournament. But I've seen piles of cigarette-ends with my own eyes about 10 metres from the main entrance. As they

Friendly COMMUNIST claims Moscow Open

Vladimir Barsky

In the six years of its existence the Moscow Open has gone from being a small 'warm-up' tournament before the Aeroflot to the most popular chess festival in Russia. During the student holidays the Russian State Social University (RSSU) let around 1,500 chess players into its auditoriums – about 200 more people than a year ago, although the prize fund was reduced from seven million to five million rubles (for reference, one euro is worth approximately 42-43 rubles). As a mass festival we can already compare it with Wijk aan Zee, all that's left is to set it up as our super-tournament. It's quite possible that the first round-robin could take place as early as January-February 2011. It would probably be a little more modest than category 18-19, but then Moscow wasn't built in a day, either.

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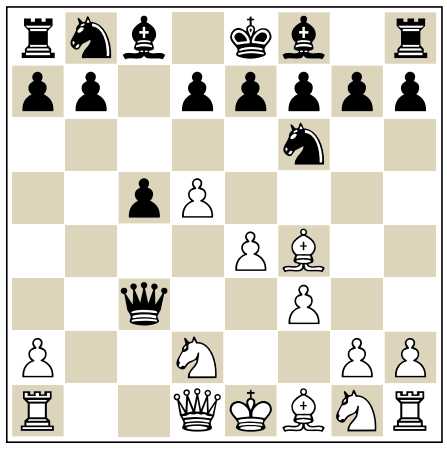
The communists come to mind of their own accord, no matter what the author wants. Partly because previously the headquar-

ters of the Comintern were located where the RSSU is now (see New In Chess 2010/1). And also because, unexpectedly for everyone, the communist Konstantin Chernyshov won the main tournament. The 42-year-old grandmaster, who was a modest 46th on the starting list (Elo 2556), writes a chess column in the newspaper *Pravda* and holds one of the top posts on the Voronezh Oblast party committee. Then again, after Kasparov moved into similar political work many people began to have a less sceptical attitude towards Chernyshov's business, and Kostya himself is a nice, intelligent person. If all communists were like him I'd probably apply to join the Russian Communist Party.

Unlike other modern grandmasters, Chernyshov has his own, easily-distinguishable style. It's not only the fact that he's partial towards rare openings, but also his ability to constantly find original ideas. When I was working on a book about the Scotch Game recently, I realized that it would be very convenient to have separate databases available for the main specialists in this opening. And I created four databases – the games of Kasparov, Morozevich, Rublevsky and Chernyshov. You can check this for yourself – Konstantin has introduced a lot of new stuff into the theory of this opening. He also has quite decent technique, which is evident at least in the game Chernyshov-Najer which was annotated for this report by the victor.

With so many obvious virtues, why then does Konstantin have such a low rating? I don't know. Perhaps he's busy with party organizing and doesn't pay much attention to chess, not playing very often. But he's capable of finding super-moves. I won't hold back any longer, I'll 'quote' the game Chernyshov-Grischuk that was played in the Russian Team Championship on April 22, 2005, precisely on the day of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin's birth.

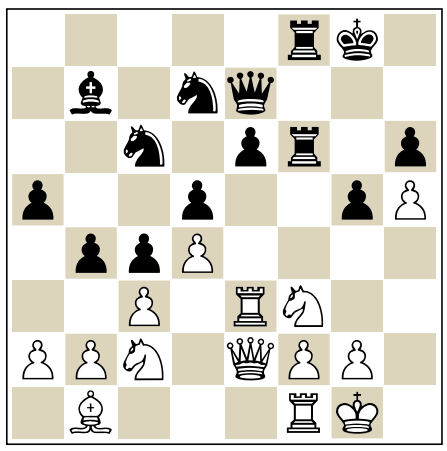


Chernyshov-Grischuk
position after 8...♕xc3

9.♗c7!!

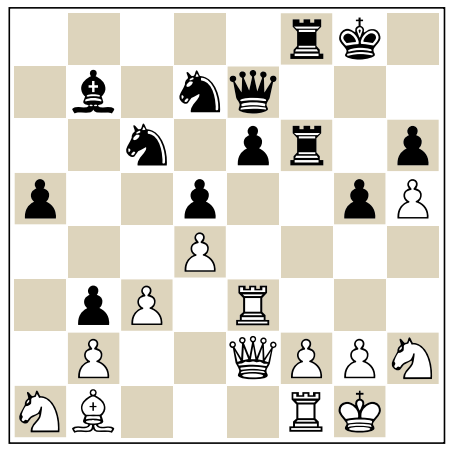
Cutting off the queen's path home via a5. This move would occur to hardly anyone over the board or in home analysis. The queen hunt turned out successfully, White chased it to g7 (after 9...g6 10.♖c1 ♕e3+ 11.♘e2 ♘a6 12.♘c4 ♕h6 13.♗f4 ♕g7), almost stalemated his opponent and won convincingly.

There was also room for an unforgettable move in one of Chernyshov's Moscow games. But only with a minus sign, as its authorship didn't belong to Konstantin, but to his opponent, the tournament's favourite by rating.



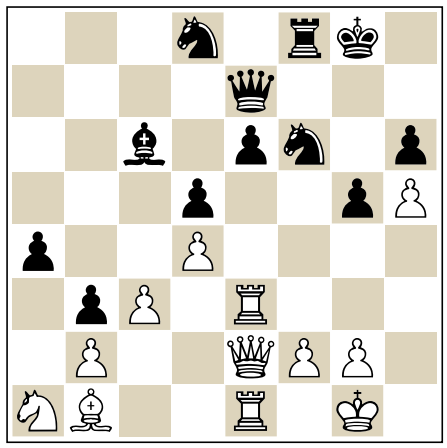
Motylev-Chernyshov
position after 23...♘c6

From the pawn structure it's easy to assume that the French Defence has been played. True, it started somewhat strangely – 1.e4 e6 2.d4 b6!?, White exchanged off the dark-squared bishops, pestered the e6 pawn and forced his opponent to weaken his king. In a word, everything was going fine with him. As Chernyshov put it, when he played **24.♘h2!** Motylev was very happy with his position. However, the reply **24...b3!?** forced him to start thinking. Perhaps White had overlooked this jab? But this attempt to muddy the waters isn't all that frightening. Nevertheless, after **25.axb3 cxb3** followed the unbelievable **26.♘a1?**



'In my opinion, you can only play a piece down in a practical game if your goal is to make your opponent happy. Well, here the spectators were happy, too!' (Chernyshov). The oddest part of it is that Rybka also recommends this move for a long time (before it switches to 26.♘e1)! Apparently the hundreds and even thousands of hours spent in front of a monitor aren't for nothing and 'mechanize' the thinking process. Sure, the computer has taught us that you can't toss anything out of your calculations, even the most unbelievable continuations, but you can't take this thesis so literally! How could Alexander, a subtle and deep player, find himself making such a clumsy move? White wins the exchange pure and simple, but how can the knight get out of the corner after that?

26...a4 27.♘g4 ♘d8 28.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 29.♖e1 ♗c6



Black has gradually activated his pieces and switched to the attack. White gave up the unlucky knight for two pawns, but he couldn't save the game:

30.♗g6 ♗e8 31.♗f5 ♗d7 32.♗d3 ♕d6 33.♖f3 ♔g7 34.g3 ♗e8 35.♗g6 ♗xg6 36.hxg6 ♕c6 37.♕e5 ♔xg6 38.♔g2 ♕d7 39.♕e2 ♔g7 40.♕a6 ♖f7 41.♖e2 ♖e7 42.♖fe3 ♘g4 43.♖d3 ♕c6 44.♕a5 ♘b7 45.♕b4 ♘d6 46.♘xb3 axb3 47.♕xb3 ♘f5 48.♖f3 ♖f7 49.♕b8 e5 50.♖xe5 ♘xe5 51.♕xe5+ ♔g6 52.♔g1 ♕d7 53.c4 dxc4 54.g4 ♘d6 White resigned.

When I asked him to annotate his favourite game from the Moscow Open, Chernyshov chose the following encounter.

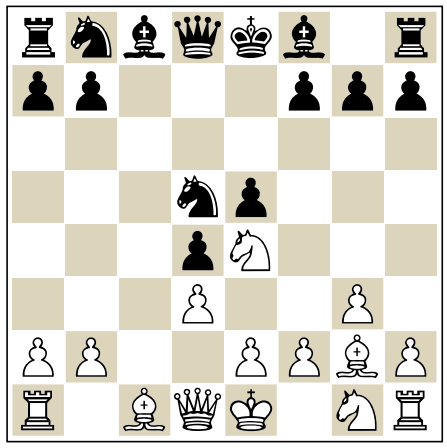
NOTES BY
Konstantin Chernyshov

EO 12.2 – A23
Konstantin Chernyshov
Evgeny Najer
Moscow Open 2010 (7)

Alas, my preparations for this game took a tragic-comic turn. My chess program developed a fault, and I had to phone home to my native Voronezh. But my wife doesn't play chess, and the question 'What does Zhenya Najer play?' created an insurmountable pause at the other end of the line...

Finally, following several dozen heavy sighs, by joint efforts at a distance I managed to help her to figure out the computer program, and the first few moves were determined. I was unable to withstand this torture any more. After thanking my wife for the help she had been able to offer, I switched off my mobile – and went to sleep.

1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.g3 c6 4.♗g2 d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.d3 d4 7.♘e4 ♘d5



8.♕b3!?

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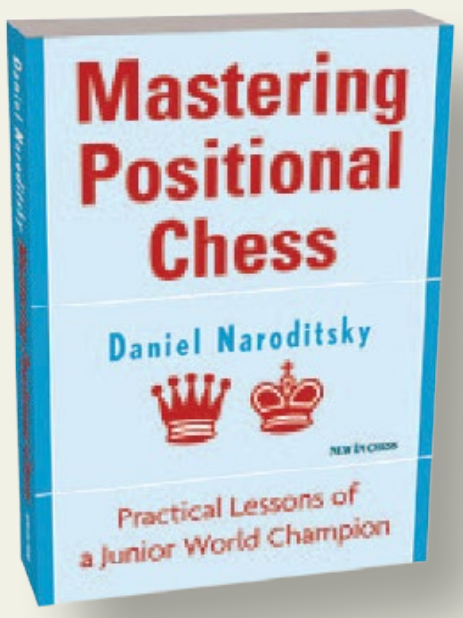

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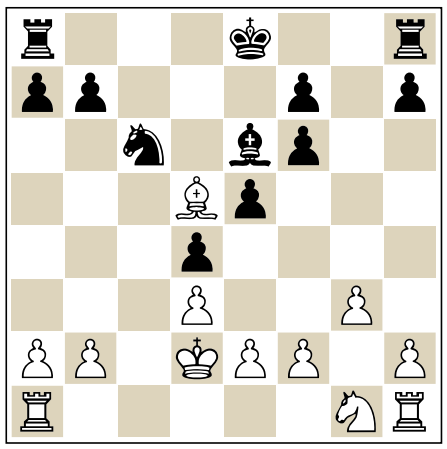
Amazingly, this is a novelty! Here, without great success, White has twice brought out his king's knight to f3, but to me the queen diversion seemed more natural and productive.

8...♗b4+ 9.♗d2 ♘c6 10.♕xd5!? ♕xd5 11.♘f6+ gxf6 12.♗xd5 ♗xd2+ 13.♔xd2 ♗e6

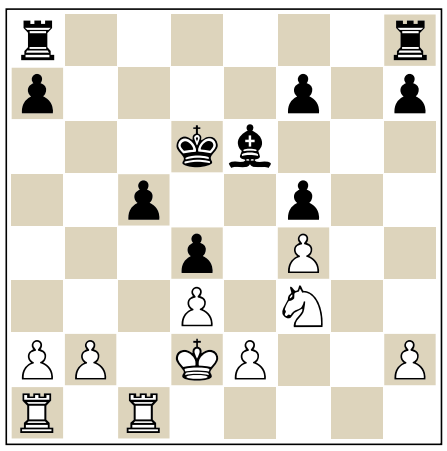


14.♗e4!?

By the 14th move the contours of an endgame have unexpectedly appeared. But what should White play? For all the apparent activity of the advanced phalanx of black pawns, I thought that they were more likely to become a target. However, further simplification of the position, involving the exchange of the bishop, does not bring any dividends: 14.♗xc6+ bxc6 15.♘f3 ♗d5, or 14.♗xe6 fxe6.

Therefore for the moment White maintains the tension and endeavours to provoke further weaknesses in the opponent's pawn structure.

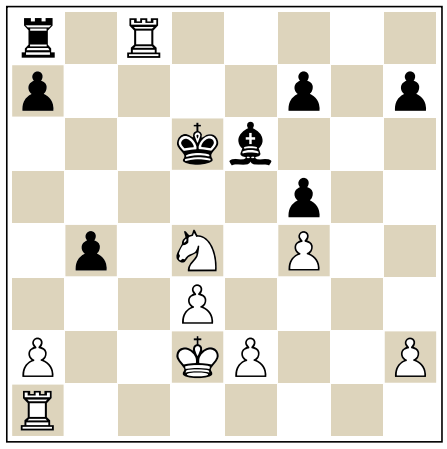
14...♔d7 15.f4 exf4 16.gxf4 f5 17.♗xc6+ bxc6 18.♘f3 c5 19.♖hc1 ♔d6



20.b4!

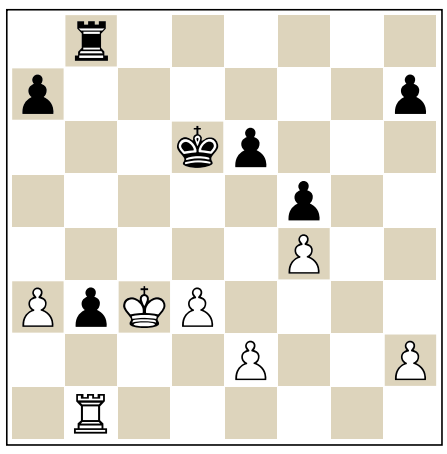
A successful continuation of White's strategy. Now Black's central bastion is destroyed, and the knight takes up a powerful, dominating position in the middle of the board.

20...cxb4 21.♘xd4 ♖hc8 22.♖xc8



22...♖xc8? A serious mistake. Black should have recaptured with the bishop, with the following variation in mind: 22...♗xc8 23.a3 bxa3 24.♖xa3 a5.

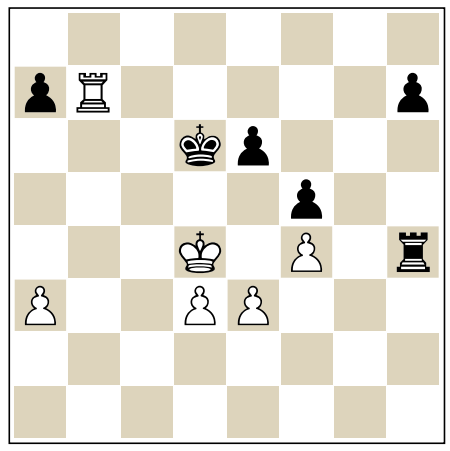
23.a3! b3 24.♖b1 ♖b8 25.♔c3 ♖c8+ 26.♔d2 ♖b8 27.♘xe6 fxe6 28.♔c3



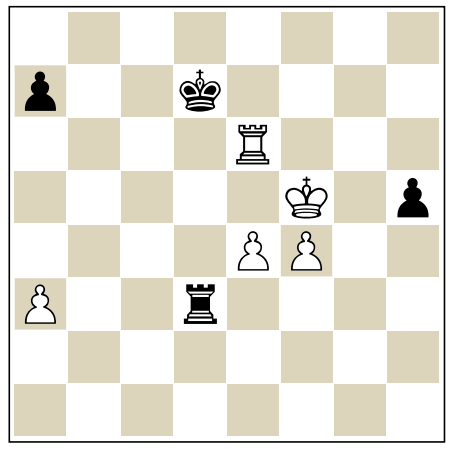
The pawn is lost. Accepting the inevitable, Black switches his rook to the kingside, in order to set up a passed pawn and create some counterplay.

28...♖g8 29.♖xb3 ♖g2 30.e3 ♖xh2 31.♖b7 ♖h3 32.♔d4 ♖h4

With the idea after the capture of the a-pawn of striking in the centre with ...e6-e5! Alas, I have an excellent resource, which not only extinguishes the opponent's possible initiative, but also creates a complete spatial superiority.



33.♖b5! ♖h3 34.♖a5 h5 35.e4 ♖f3 36.♖a6+ ♔e7 37.♔e5 ♖xd3 38.♖xe6+ ♔d7 39.♔xf5



Despite the material equality, Black is unable to defend. White's pawn pair is supported by his pieces, whereas Black's forces are chaotically scattered around the board.

39...♖xa3 40.♖h6 a5 41.♖xh5 a4 42.e5 ♖a1 43.♔f6

Black resigned.

Evgeny Bareev, Le Quang Liem and Ernesto Inarkiev scored the same number of points as the winner, seven out of nine. Each one of the threesome had a higher Buchholz score than the winner, but the first additional indicator was the number of wins, and Chernyshov, unlike the others, lost one game, then won six. Arguing about which additional indicator is fairer is fruitless, as in any system there'll always be those who are left disappointed. Something else is more important: the tournament prizes weren't shared,

and with the same number of points the first prize winner received two and a half times more money than the fourth prize winner (500,000 versus 200,000). Is this fair? If a player doesn't lose then he stays at the very top, and he gets the strongest opponents. Then again, it's better if the players themselves talk about this subject. We'll only note that a tax was taken out of the prize money – 13 percent for Russians and 30 percent for foreigners.

Second prize winner Evgeny Bareev hasn't played that much in the last couple of years, but recently he decided to rouse himself and won the Russian Cup, overcoming Ian Nepomniachtchi in the final. Evgeny is one of the most cunning players of our time, only Ruslan Ponomariov can rival him in this respect. Bareev always knows what and how he has to play with every opponent. For example, he skilfully drove Motylev into time-trouble and provoked Bologan into excessively sharp play. At the same time he also gave up two whites – he offered a draw on the sixth move to someone who wasn't the most fearsome opponent (probably for some personal reason he couldn't play on that day) and by no means seriously fought his student Le Quang Liem.

Meanwhile, the young Vietnamese player became the real discovery of the tournament. Before this he was known as the storm of the Internet, but it turns out that he's no less dangerous at the board, too. Le Quang Liem is very well-grounded theoretically, and the main thing is that he's very strong in tense, dynamic positions. Judging by all that, this player has arrived at top-level chess seriously and for a long time.

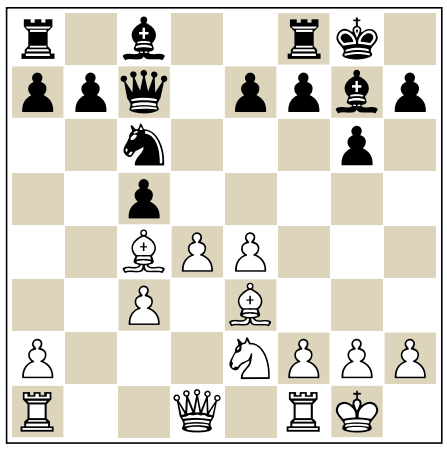
One of his finest efforts was his win against Sasikiran which Le Quang Liem annotated for this report.

NOTES BY

Le Quang Liem

GI 5.10 – D87
Le Quang Liem
Krishnan Sasikiran
Moscow 2010 (8)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e4 ♘xc3 6.bxc3 ♗g7 7.♗c4 c5 8.♘e2 ♘c6 9.♗e3 0-0 10.0-0 ♕c7



11.♖b1

In this popular line of the Grünfeld, 11.♖c1 is more often played, but to me it seems that the rook is better placed on the b-file.

11...♗d7

If Black keeps the same plan as in the 11.♖c1 variation, with 11...♖d8 12.♗f4 ♗e5 (12...e5 can be met by 13.♗g5 ♖d7 14.d5 and 12...♕d7 by 13.dxc5) 13.♗xe5 ♘xe5 14.♗b3 ♘g4 15.♘g3 h5 16.♕f3 c4 17.♗c2 h4 18.h3 hxg3 19.hxg4 gxf2+ 20.♖xf2 e5 21.d5 ♖f8 22.g5 White enjoys a huge advantage due to his active pieces and his attacking prospects. In all those cases it is obvious that the placement of the rook on b1 is in White's favour (compared to the line 10...♕c7 11.♖c1 ♗d7).

Here White does not need to be afraid of 11...cxd4 12.cxd4 ♘xd4 13.♗xf7+ ♖xf7 14.♘xd4, and I believe that White should be slightly better.

12.♗d3

The game has transposed to the line 10...♗d7 11.♖b1 ♕c7.

Now Black has to choose between two basic plans: to play ...♖ad8 and then ...♗c8, or ...♖fd8 connected with ...♗e8. In general Black's idea is to press in the centre, force White to play d5 or e5, and then undermine them with his e- and f-pawns.

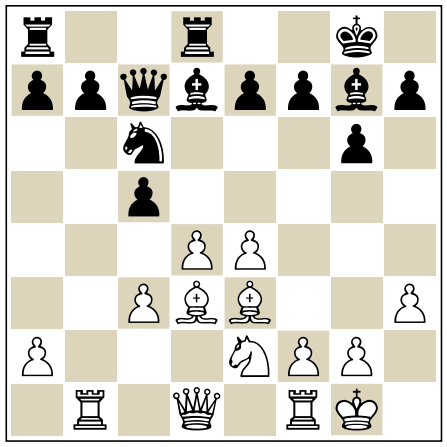
12...♖fd8 13.h3

A useful move. White takes away the g4-square to prevent ...♗g4 or ...♘c6-e5-g4 in some variations.

VLADIMIR BARSKY

Previously known as the storm of the Internet, Le Quang Liem demonstrated that he is no less dangerous at the board, too.

Now White is already threatening to play f4 and start a kingside attack.



13...e6

A logical novelty – Black did not want to let White's pawn go to d5. But this move has some drawbacks as well. Firstly, Black's light-squared bishop is slightly passive, and secondly it weakens the h4-d8 diagonal.

13...♗e8 14.d5 ♘e5 15.c4 e6 16.♘f4 ♖ab8 17.♗e2 ♖d6 18.♕c2 ♖a6 19.♖b5!? was seen in Topalov-Svidler, Nanjing 2008, which ended in a win for White.

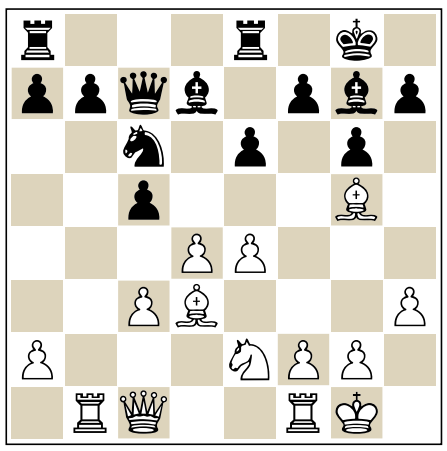
14.♗g5

Better was 14.♕c1 ♗e8 15.♖d1 ♖ac8 16.♕b2, and White keeps strong pressure.

14...♖e8

Here 14...cxd4!? 15.♗xd8 ♖xd8 16.cxd4 ♘xd4 17.♘xd4 ♗xd4 deserved attention, giving Black good compensation for the exchange.

15.♕c1!



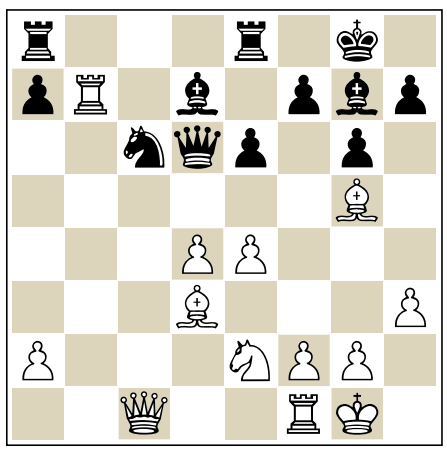
Here White stands better because he controls important dark squares and has a strong centre. White wants to consolidate with ♕e3, ♖fd1 and then start an attack with h3-h4-h5, or e5 followed by ♘e2-g3-e4. So, Black's answer is almost forced.

Less clear is 15.e5 ♘e7 16.♘g3 ♗c6 17.♘e4 cxd4 18.cxd4 ♖ad8.

15...cxd4

On 15...♖ac8 White continues his plan with 16.♕e3. After 15...♕d6 he has 16.♕a3 b6 17.♖fd1.

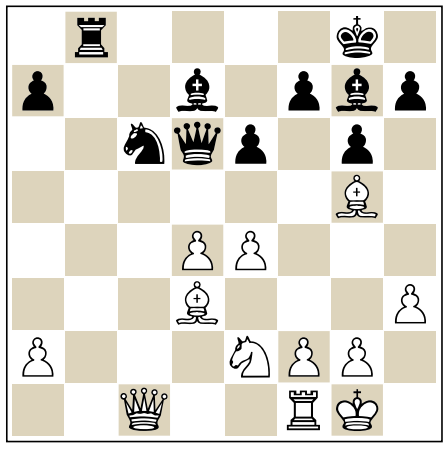
16.cxd4 ♕d6 17.♖xb7



17...♖ab8

It is not easy to regain the pawn: 17...♘xd4 18.♘xd4 ♖ec8 (if 18...♗xd4 19.♕c7 ♕xc7 20.♖xc7 ♗c8 21.♗b5 Black loses the exchange, while 18...♕xd4 19.♖d1 ♗a4 20.♗c2 ♕c4 21.♗xa4 ♕xa4 22.♖dd7 gives White a dangerous initiative) 19.♘c2! ♕xd3 20.♖d1 ♕xe4 21.♖dxd7 ♖xc2 22.♕e3 ♕xe3 23.♗xe3, and White is better.

18.♖xb8 ♖xb8



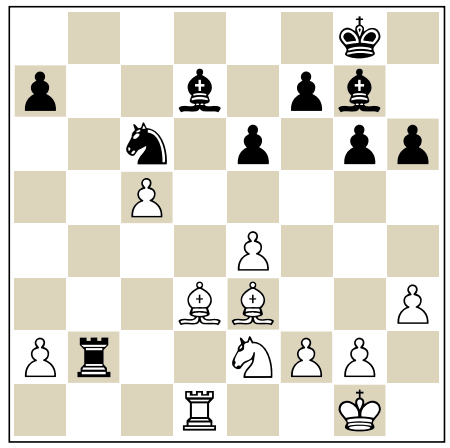
19.♕c5!

This move, the only way to keep the pawn, gives White an endgame advantage.

19...♕xc5 20.dxc5 h6

Looking for active counterplay with 20...♖b2 21.♖d1 ♖xa2 22.♗b5 ♖a1 fails to 23.♗c1!.

21.♗e3 ♖b2 22.♖d1

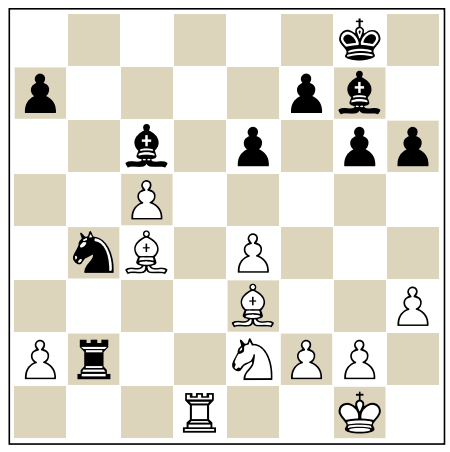


22...♘b4?

This move just worsens Black's situation, although it is already difficult enough.

The best defence was 22...♖xa2 23.♗c4 ♖c2 (23...♖a1 24.♖xa1 ♗xa1 25.♗xh6 is excellent for White) 24.♗b3 ♖b2 25.♖xd7 ♖xb3 26.g3, when, although White is clearly better, Black keeps some chances of saving the game.

23.♗c4 ♗c6



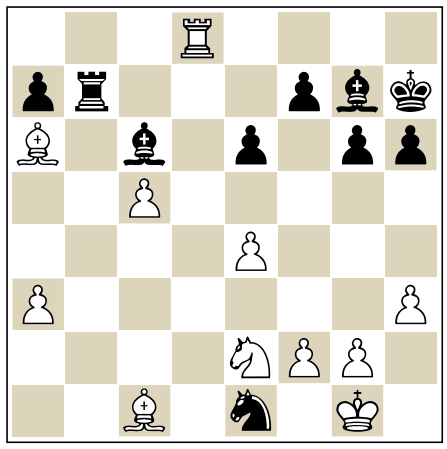
24.a3!

And suddenly Black's knight is in trouble.

24...♘c2 25.♖d8+ ♔h7 26.♗c1 ♖b7 27.♗d3 ♘e1

He might have tried 27...♘a1, but it would not have been a real improvement on the game continuation.

28.♗a6



28...♖b1 29.♔f1 ♘c2 30.♗d3 ♗b5 31.c6 ♗xd3 32.♖xd3 ♖b6 33.c7 ♖c6 34.♖d7

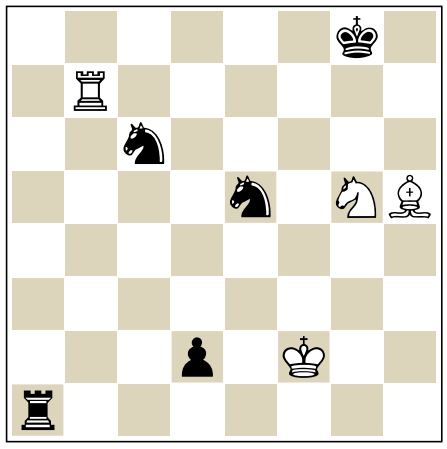
34.♗f4! wins faster, but the move in the game is also enough.

34...♘d4 35.♗f4 ♘xe2 36.♔xe2 e5 37.♗e3

Black resigned.

During the tournament the author of these lines was working as a commentator – demonstrating what was going on in the games of the leaders to the audience on a big screen in a separate room, and giving my explanations. The same image that we saw was simultaneously shown on the tv screens situated in the corridors next to the playing halls. The spectators who came were very varied, including some who didn't know chess notation very well, and sometimes I explained the possible course of events by pointing to a square on the board with the mouse: White to here, Black to here, and so on. But after two or three rounds one of the women players complained to the arbiters that she'd seen a variation on the screen that she'd just been calculating at the board. We didn't want to give any hints away, so we had to stop doing this type of commentary.

Thanks to my work I followed the performances of the participants in the open tournament very closely for the first time in many years. And there was something to watch! For example, an episode from the fourth round.



Sergienko-Vescovi
position after 55...d2

The pawn on d2 can't be stopped, and a long drawn-out endgame emerges with Black a knight up. But White is aided by an attack on the king.

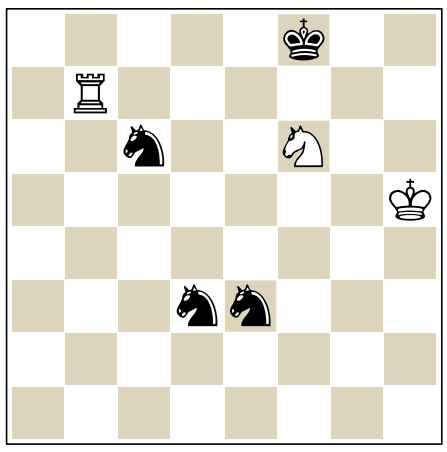
56.♘e4!

Now on 56...d1♕ follows 57.♘f6+ ♔f8 58.♘h7+ ♔g8 59.♘f6+, with perpetual check. Vescovi tries his last chance.

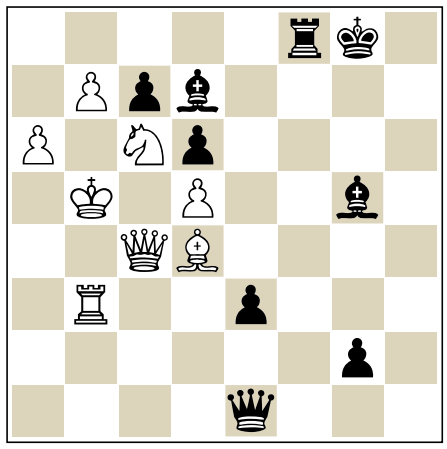
56...d1♘+!? 57.♔g3 ♖a3+ 58.♔f4 ♘d3+ 59.♔g5 ♖a5+ 60.♔h6 ♖xh5+

Black has to give up the exchange in order to avoid being mated accidentally.

61.♔xh5 ♘e3 62.♘f6+ ♔f8 63.♘h7+ ♔e8 64.♘f6+ ♔f8



Draw. The final picture is quite amusing! But it pales in comparison to the fantastic canvas that the same Brazilian grandmaster painted the next day with the co-authorship of a young Moscow master.



Vescovi-Krylov
position after 51.a6

Black starts and... My friend Oleg Pervakov usually shows me positions like these: in a modern study you won't immediately grasp where the pawns are going and who's fighting for what.

Moscow Open 2010

1	Chernyshov	IGM	RUS	2556	7
2	Bareev	IGM	RUS	2643	7
3	Le Quang Liem	IGM	VIE	2647	7
4	Inarkiev	IGM	RUS	2649	7
5	Sasikiran	IGM	IND	2653	6½
6	Bologan	IGM	MDA	2692	6½
7	Andreikin	IGM	RUS	2635	6½
8	Kurnosov	IGM	RUS	2668	6½
9	Azarov	IGM	BLR	2622	6½
10	Rublevsky	IGM	RUS	2697	6½
11	Bu Xiangzhi	IGM	CHN	2673	6½
12	Belov	IGM	RUS	2595	6½
13	Vorobiov	IGM	RUS	2621	6½
14	Savchenko	IGM	RUS	2638	6½
15	Rakhmanov	IGM	RUS	2591	6
16	Motylev	IGM	RUS	2697	6
17	Khismatullin	IGM	RUS	2651	6
18	Zhigalko	IGM	BLR	2668	6
19	Volkov	IGM	RUS	2623	6
20	Pugachov	IM	RUS	2445	6
21	Kazhgaleyev	IGM	KAZ	2643	6
22	Matlakov	IM	RUS	2587	6
23	Najer	IGM	RUS	2665	6
24	Amonatov	IGM	TJK	2634	6
25	Nepomniachtchi	IGM	RUS	2658	6
26	Vescovi	IGM	BRA	2660	6
27	Shinkevich	IM	RUS	2501	6
28	Grachev	IGM	RUS	2653	6
29	Khusnutdinov	IGM	KAZ	2513	5½
30	Krapivin	IGM	RUS	2495	5½

187 players, 9 rounds

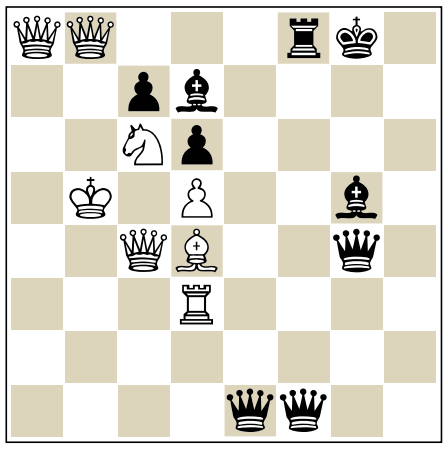
VLADIMIR BARSKY

The oldest participant, 91-year-old World War II veteran Nikolay Naumov, came to Moscow from distant Sakhalin, but wasn't too happy with his play.

51...g1♕

Looking in on the commentary room Grandmaster Ian Nepomniachtchi suggested 51...♖b8!?, slowing down both pawns that are on the verge of promotion. But there's a flaw in the 'mysterious' rook move – White can switch to an attack on the king: 52.♕c2! ♕f1+ 53.♔a5 ♗f5 54.a7!, with a win.

Rybka found an astoundingly beautiful variation: 51...♕f1! 52.♖d3 g1♕ 53.a7 ♕g4 54.a8♕ e2 55.b8♕ e1♕. By God, you feel like engraving this picture, putting it in a frame and nailing it to the wall!



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

This probably sounds rather strange, but the queen on b8 is pinned, which means that White suffers the decisive loss; he can't hold on for long.

In the event of 52.a7 (instead of 52.♖d3) Black also has a beautiful, although not as impressive win: 52...♗xc6+! 53.dxc6+ d5! 54.♕d3 ♕xd3+ 55.♖xd3 g1♕ 56.a8♕ (56.b8♕ ♕b1+ 57.♔a4 ♖xb8 is bad) 56...♕b1+ 57.♔a4 (57.♔c5 ♗e7+ 58.♔xd5 ♕b5+ with a crushing attack) 57...♕c2+ 58.♔a5 ♕a2+ 59.♔b4 ♖xa8, and it's all over for the white queens.

52.a7 ♕gf1 53.a8♕ ♕xc4+

Even more decisive is 53...♗xc6+ 54.dxc6+ ♕xc4+! 55.♔xc4 d5+.

54.♔xc4 ♕f1+ 55.♖d3 e2

Here the same idea worked: 55...♗xc6 56.dxc6 d5+ 57.♔xd5 ♕f7+ with a mating attack.

56.♗c3 ♗d8??

A terrible mistake in mutual time trouble. As before, after 56...♗xc6 57.dxc6 d5+ Black would have won.

57.b8♕ e1♕ 58.♗xe1 ♗xc6 59.♕xd8?

Vescovi probably wanted to move the draw out of harm's way. But after 59.♕xc6! ♖f4+ 60.♔b3! White moves his king away from the checks and wins.

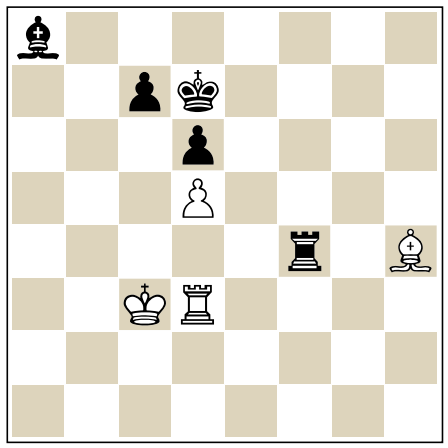
59...♗xa8 60.♕g5+ ♔f7 61.♕h5+?

After 61.♗h4! Black can't escape perpetual check.

61...♔e7 62.♗h4+ ♔d7 63.♕g4+ ♖f5 64.♔c3 ♕f4!?

It seems that the queens are tired of the battles!

65.♕xf4 ♖xf4



Subsequently Black transferred the bishop to f7 and the rook to the fifth rank. White didn't hold onto his pawn and admitted his defeat on the 104th move.

Under the auspices of the Moscow Open a junior tournament was held with a prize fund of 700,000 rubles, and also a tournament called 'As old as our victory' for players born in 1945 and older (650,000 rubles). First place here was taken by the two-time champion of the USSR Vitaly Tseshkovsky. The oldest participant, 91-year-old World War II veteran Nikolay Naumov, came to Moscow from distant Sakhalin (an island in the Pacific Ocean, near Japan). As Nikolay Stepanovich said, he liked everything at the tournament except for his own play. Well, as long as a man isn't satisfied with himself, he'll continue to grow!

The World Cup for chess composition solving also deserves a mention, won by Piotr Murdzia (Poland), as does the Japanese chess (Shogi) tournament, the arbiters' seminar and the academic and practical conference dedicated to the issues of chess education in schools. And next year the organizers promise to make the programme even more full and varied.

From Berlinchen to Alaska

Emanuel Lasker. Denker, Weltenbürger, Schachweltmeister (thinker, citizen of the world, world champion) is an amazing book by its scope and high quality, finds Hans Ree.

In recent years I have had to go to the grocer's several times to put a new chess book on the scales, but with the Lasker book this was not necessary, as one of the editors Michael Negele has already helpfully declared that it weighs 3.5 kilogrammes.

Apart from the 16 introductory pages, which have Roman numerals, the book has 1079 large pages. There are about 500 pictures. Though at 114 euro the book is quite reasonably priced, it is still costly. Would it sell?

At the Corus tournament the owner of one of the book stalls told me that it sold like hot cakes and that he would soon have to replenish his stock. This was good news, an encouragement for ambitious publishers.

How could the book have sprawled so exuberantly? As the editorial team consists of Richard Forster, Stefan Hansen and Michael Negele, the obvious suspect would be Forster, the man who gave us the massive tomes about Amos Burn and the Schach-Gesellschaft Zürich, but in this case that doesn't seem justified.

To put it in terms of a film production, Hansen, the president of the Emanuel Lasker Gesellschaft, seems to have been the originator and financier of the project, Negele the producer and Forster the technical director. Keeping the book within more or less reasonable bounds, rather than expanding it, was one of his most difficult tasks.

Heroes Shivering

An article in the January issue of the German magazine *Schach* by Negele describes the history of the production. Obviously a big weight has fallen off his shoulders now that the book is out. The title of the article says it all: 'Fairytale or nightmare? or Of heroes who went out to learn to shiver'.

The heroes are the three editors, who started to invite contributions to the book early in 2006, intending to present it to the public at the Dresden Olympiad of 2008, an aim that understandably was not fulfilled.

It seems a tough schedule for any big book, and this one has a list of 26 contributors from many different countries, who submitted their texts in many different languages. Unavoidably conflicts arose.

Deadlines were not met, agreements about the length of the articles were ignored and sensible editorial advice was met with anger, to such an extent that Negele speaks about a multi-dimensional nightmare.

The biggest blow to the project threatened at the end of 2008, when Robert Hübner announced that he would retract his contribution, one of the most substantial and important of them all, almost a book in itself. Luckily Stefan Hansen could convince him that the perceived conflict was based on a misunderstanding, and Hübner relented.

Slightly more than half the book is devoted to Lasker's chess career. There are articles about his problems and endgame studies, Hübner deals with Lasker's early career, finishing with his first world championship match against Steinitz in 1894, and several events – Hastings 1895, Lasker-Tarrasch 1908 and Zurich 1934 – are singled out for special treatment. The biggest chapter consists of a collection of all Lasker's match and tournament games, many with annotations from older sources.

Besides this, there are articles about other aspects of Lasker's life. Lasker in Britain, the U.S., Cuba, the Netherlands and Russia. Lasker's often considerable accomplishments in other games, such as bridge, go and Laska, one of the games he invented himself. There are articles on Lasker as a mathematician, philosopher, jour-

nalist and as a bohemian in Berlin intellectual circles.

Some of these subjects were also dealt with in a German book that appeared in 2001, *Emanuel Lasker, Schach, Philosophie, Wissenschaft*, edited by Michael Dreyer and Ulrich Sieg. At the time I wrote about it in New In Chess, and now I wondered if some chapters of that book might have reappeared. But I found that the two books are completely independent. None of the writers from 2001 has contributed to the book that is presented now.

Losing the Backbone

As a journalist I have often been in the situation that I started out writing on some subject, but then my thoughts jumped to issues vaguely connected to it, upon which I started digressing, so that I ended up having to remove the original subject from my article to keep it in shape. On a much grander scale this is what happened to the Lasker book.

The original idea was that the backbone of the book should be a new intellectual biography of Lasker that would serve as a correction to the romantic and often inaccurate Hannak biography of 1952.

Though I have often made fun of Hannak's book, I must say that when I read it as a youngster I was enthralled by it. Only much later did I wonder how I could have fallen for the mythological style that would befit a children's book. Anyway, an overhaul was certainly due.

But when the book expanded because of the length of the chapters that were supposed to be an addition to the biographical backbone, and the prospective author of that biography procrastinated, it finally had to be left out.

That's how it goes. But one would wish that at least a brief chronology of Lasker's life would have been inserted, a few pages with the most important events in his life, a thing that would have been easy to do on the basis of the rich material that can be found in this book.

It is true that the reader can do it himself by hopping from one chapter to another, collecting the relevant biographical details of different periods. But why make it so difficult?

I own a big book on Marcel Duchamp by Duchamp scholars Jennifer Cough-Cooper and Jacques Caumont, called *Ephemerides on Marcel Duchamp and Rrose Sélavy*. Ephemerides is a term used in astronomy and astrology for charts or tables that indicate the position of astronomical objects in the sky at different times.

The book has about 500 pages, which is only an estimate, because the authors have coyly refused to number the pages. In a way it is a wonderful book. It documents the life of Marcel Duchamp almost day by day, it is chock-full of interesting anecdotes and beautifully and abundantly illustrated.

However, it has one maddening and deliberate oddity. Apparently the authors thought that Duchamp was quirky and that therefore they had to be quirky too. They do not chronicle Duchamp's life by year, but by date, starting with everything that happened on January 1 of all the years of his life, then proceeding to January 2, and so on till December 31. The (intended) result was that it is practically impossible to check on any event at all. It is not enough to know the year when something happened, which you usually do. You have to know the date.

I played with the idea of cutting out all the items and rearrange them in conventional chronological order to make my own enhanced book of Duchamp ephemerides, which would be a real treasure, but the task was beyond me.

I was reminded of this book, but this is not to say that the editors of the Lasker book intended to make life as difficult for the readers as the two Duchamp scholars did. But in a book of almost 1100 pages a simple chronology of Lasker's life would have been most welcome.

With the enormous amount of information that the book provides it would be silly to complain seriously about the lack of one item.

Playing Leonardo

How good was Lasker in all the intellectual fields that he was interested in? He was certainly an excellent game player, reaching international level in bridge and becoming one of the best players of go in Germany, which may not have been such a great accomplishment, as very few people in the West were playing go then.

His contributions to mathematics were relatively few – in the bibliography 14 mathematical publications are mentioned –, but substantial and in this field his name is preserved by the Lasker Ring and the Lasker-Noether theorem, explained here by the mathematician Joachim Rosenthal. It is a highly technical explanation, and the 'broader public' that Rosenthal wants to reach can only consist of those who are already versed in mathematics. Of course this is not meant as criticism, but only to show the wide range of the book.

My impression is that the contribution of Noether, who generalized a particular result by Lasker, is seen as the most brilliant part of the theorem, but anyway it is a great honour to have one's name joined with that of

the famous mathematician Emmy Noether.

Lasker as a playwright, however, was far from a success. The one drama he wrote, in collaboration with his brother Berthold, was never performed. It plays a role in chess history because of the well-known story about the telegram sent by his brother Berthold during the tournament in Moscow in 1925.

As the story goes, Lasker had a superior position against Torre, received the telegram, which gave him the hope – soon to be abandoned – that his play would actually be performed, and was so happy and excited by the news that he blundered and allowed a deadly seesaw combination.

The telegram is given as one of the illustrations in the book. There is no indication that Lasker himself attributed his loss to the fatal telegram.

In her article about Berlin bohemia, Susanna Poldauf, biographer of Philidor, calls the play *Vom Menschen die Geschichte* the result of a continuing joint creative process by the brothers of at least seven years.

She is too kind, I think, when she attributes its rejection by theatre companies to the superficiality of the Berlin public that wanted entertainment instead of a philosopher's take on ethics and morality. I have never read the play, but everything that I have read about it suggests that the supposedly superficial Berlin public would have been right to stay away from it.

The play's title means: 'Of mankind the history'. Poldauf suggests that this may not have been the best choice of a title, and indeed it seems fit to put off the theatre public, and not only the superficial segment of it.

But it is an honest title, describing fairly what the public should expect. The play consists of a succession of allegorical scenes, from the earliest time of man up to the contemporary Berlin coffeehouses, that throw light on the eternal tension between ethics and practicality. No wonder it wasn't put on the stage.

Various writers in this book note Emanuel's ambition, the typical ambition of the dilettante, not just to make a modest contribution to a field that had caught his interest, but to revolutionize it completely. Occasionally this works well. The great Ludwig Wittgenstein was a dilettante when he wrote his *Tractatus* with the aim of answering, or rather obviating, all philosophical questions once and for all. He didn't quite succeed, but the work was and still is tremendously influential.

As a philosopher and social thinker Lasker wanted to say the last word, not based on a thorough study of empirical facts or other people's writings, but just by exerting his own mental powers. He tried to refute his friend Einstein's theory of relativity – by sleight of hand I would say – and even as a would-be military strategist he didn't refrain from the most outrageously confident statements at the beginning of World War I.

The theatre play is a case in point. The history of mankind, no less. It is not a suitable subject for the stage.

Lonely in Russia

Why did he choose to live in the Soviet Union in 1935? As a Jew he had to flee Nazi Germany, of course, but surely other countries must have come into consideration. Lasker had played his second match against Steinitz and several important tournaments in Russia and probably had good memories of Russian hospitality. At the tournament in Moscow in 1935 and during his following vacation in Russia, together with his wife Martha, he was celebrated as a hero. What's more, living in Moscow as a member of the Soviet Academy of Science he would be financially secure, which was important after the Nazis had robbed him of his savings. But still...

The new wave of terror that had started after the murder of the communist leader Sergey Kirov in 1934 was not yet in full swing, but terrible things had already happened in the Soviet Union. During the campaigns of agricultural collectivization millions of people had been murdered. Didn't Lasker know this? Didn't he care? At least, when he agreed to settle down in Moscow, he took the sensible precaution of securing permission to travel abroad when he wanted to do so.

In the same year that Lasker settled in Moscow, Ludwig Wittgenstein, world-famous in philosophical circles by then, went to Moscow to investigate the possibility of teaching in the Soviet Union. He wanted hardship; he wanted Siberia.

Back in England he said to a friend that it would be possible to live in the Soviet Union as long as one realized that one should never speak openly. Theoretically Wittgenstein valued full employment higher than freedom of speech, but as a person he was the last one to keep his opinions to him-

self. Nothing came of his Russian venture.

Lasker liked the European café society, staying there till late at night, playing games and talking freely about culture, politics and life in general. In Moscow under Stalin in 1935 Soviet citizens risked their lives by talking so freely.

In a chapter about Grigory Levenfish in his beautiful book *Russian Silhouettes*, Genna Sosonko briefly touches on Lasker's Russian years. He writes that because of the language barrier Lasker's contacts had been restricted from the start, but that as contacts with foreigners became a deadly danger for Soviet citizens, Lasker's narrow circle was gradually depleted. He knew that his telephone was tapped and that his home help Yulia would report on all his meetings.

At the end of his chapter Sosonko describes a meeting of Lasker and Levenfish, who often came to visit him. Late at night the old Lasker suggested: 'Let's go and have a coffee.' In Moscow at this hour? 'Let's go, let's go, I know a little place', said Lasker. 'The buffet at the Kiev railway station is open until three in the morning.' And there they went.

Near the end of 1937 Lasker and his wife left the Soviet-Union, ostensibly for a brief visit to Martha's daughter from a previous marriage, who was living in the United States. Isaak and Vladimir Linder, who in the Lasker book wrote the chapter about his Russian years, take the same view as Sosonko did, namely that it was an escape.

The Polar Route

After a brief stay in the Netherlands the Laskers arrived in New York in October 1937. In the book an article is reproduced that Lasker wrote in 1939 for the magazine *Aufbau* of the German Jewish Club. The title is 'Jude Wohin?', Jews where to go?

There Lasker sees the U.S. as the best place to settle for the persecuted European Jews, singling out Alaska, because that state will be of 'world-historical importance' as the starting point of a public road across the North Pole. Indeed, when you look at a globe, you see that this road would indeed be a quick shortcut to Moscow, a fact well-known to military strategists. In his book *The Community of the Future* of 1940, Lasker would return to his idea of Alaska as a good place for Jewish settlements.

Jews in Alaska? That rang a bell with Robert van de Velde, who wrote the chapter on Lasker as a bridge player. He doesn't write about Alaska, as this would be far beyond the boundaries of his real subject, but from a personal letter from him I learned that he made the connection with the best-selling crime novel by Michael Chabon, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, which appeared in 2007.

At the start of the novel a man is found shot through the head in a shabby hotel room in Alaska. He has registered under the name of Emanuel Lasker. In the room there is a beat-up copy of Siegbert Tarrasch's famous *Three Hundred Chess Games* and a chessboard with a messy looking position that later in the novel turns out to be a problem (Chabon used one of Vladimir Nabokov's problems).

The book is set in a fictional world in which history has taken a slightly different course than in our universe. In Alaska there is a semi-autonomous Jewish district called Sitka – a place of refuge for European Jews during World War II – where Yiddish is the official language. There are some big differences but also similarities with our world.

An 'Emanuel Lasker' murdered in Alaska, a Jewish district just as the real Lasker had envisaged it, could that be just a coincidence? Van de Velde wrote an email to Chabon asking him if he had known of the connection between Alaska and the real Lasker. Chabon answered that he had known nothing about it and that he was stunned.

Lasker tried to refute his friend Einstein's theory of relativity

A prophet after all, if only of a fictional world, Emanuel Lasker died in New York, 72 years old, on January 11, 1941, when the full horror of the fate of the European Jews was not yet known.

Just as the book under consideration, my article has sprawled out in all directions and what should have been the backbone of it, Lasker as a chess player, has disappeared during the writing. To that, I'll come back next time.

Emanuel Lasker. Denker, Weltenbürger, Schachweltmeister. Edited by Richard Forster, Stefan Hansen, Michael Negele. Exzelsior Verlag, Berlin 2009, €114.

The Game of the Year?

The year's still young, but we already have a strong candidate for the title above. Asked to name the best game he ever saw, Ben Finegold quipped in our previous issue: 'Three days ago, Gashimov-Grischuk, World Team Championship 2010!'. And indeed, Grischuk's stunning king march left a deep impression, and we're sure the winner will remember his audacious idea with a smile for years to come.

In Bursa, the Russian team finally managed to win a major team event again. Following an early upset against Greece(!), the Russians fought back to finish well ahead of the US and India. Only days after he won the Russian Super Final Alexander Grischuk arrived in Turkey to defend Russia's first board. With 4½ out of 7 and a 2797 performance he had every reason to be satisfied. His dashing win over Vugar Gashimov was the icing on the cake.

NOTES BY

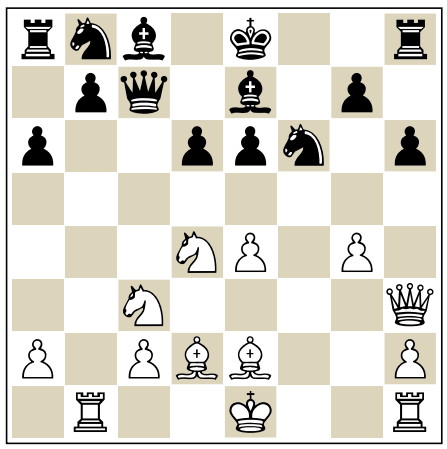
Alexander Grischuk

SI 8.1 – B97
Vugar Gashimov
Alexander Grischuk
Bursa 2010 (4)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗g5 e6 7.f4 ♕b6 8.♕d3 ♕xb2 9.♖b1 ♕a3 10.f5 ♗e7 11.fxe6 fxe6 12.♗e2 ♕a5 13.♗d2 ♕c7 14.g4

The main move. In our game from the Grand Prix stage in Elista I gained the advantage after 14.0-0 0-0 15.♕c4 ♕d7 16.♕b3 ♔h8, but I went on to lose.

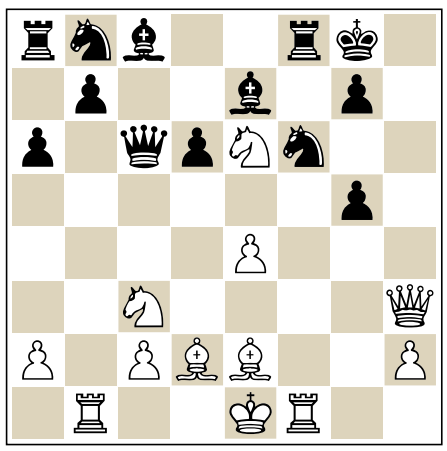
14...h6 15.♕h3



Despite the fact that our main analyst and team captain Alexander Motylev spent the whole night checking this variation, the move ♕h3 came as an unpleasant surprise to me. The result of nearly an hour's reflection was the move

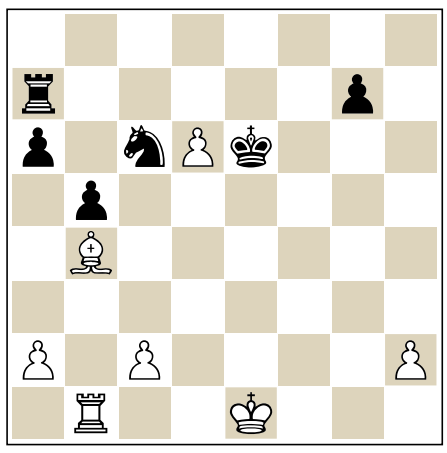
15...♖h7

which has just two virtues: it does not lose by force, and the opponent was unlikely to have analysed it. A few days ago, at the tournament in Linares, I improved Black's play, again in a game with Vugar, and despite the fact that after 15...0-0 16.g5 hxg5 17.♘xe6 ♕c6 the move 18.♖f1 was overlooked by our 'analytical brigade', I was able to make a draw almost by force:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

18...g4 19.♗xg4 ♘xg4 20.♖xf8+ ♗xf8 21.♕xg4 ♕d7 (an amusing line goes 21...♕e8 22.♘d5 ♗xe6? 23.♘f6+ ♔f7 24.♕h5+ g6 25.♕h7+ – 25.♖xb7+ ♘d7 26.♕f3 wins immediately – 25...♔xf6 26.♗c3+ ♔g5 27.♕h8 ♘d7 28.♗d2+ ♔g4 29.h3+ ♔g3 30.♗g5 ♔g2 31.♕h4 ♕f7 32.♗f4, and on this occasion the king's raid concludes with the opposite outcome) 22.♘d5 ♕xe6 23.♕xe6+ ♗xe6 24.♘c7 ♖a7 25.♘xe6 b5 26.♘xf8 ♔xf8 27.♗b4 ♔e7 28.e5 ♘c6 29.exd6+ ♔e6



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

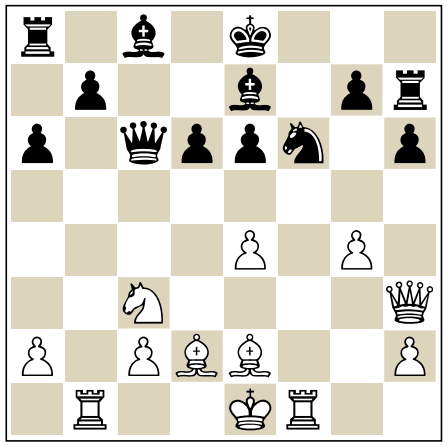
30.a4 (this immediately leads to a draw, but also after 30.♗c5 ♖f7 31.♖d1 ♖f5 – 31...♘e5 32.♔e2 ♖f4 is also possible – 32.♗f2 ♖e5+ 33.♔f1 ♖d5 34.♖xd5 ♔xd5 35.♗g3 ♔e6 36.c3 ♘a5 37.♔e2 ♘c4 38.♔d3 ♘xd6 39.♗xd6 ♔xd6 40.♔d4 – 40.♔e4 ♔c5 – 40...g5 41.h3 a5 42.a3 a4 the pawn endgame is drawn) 30...♘xb4 31.♖xb4 bxa4 32.♖xa4 ♔xd6, and within a few moves it all ended.

16.♖f1?

I thought that 15...♖h7 would definitely prevent g4-g5, but it turns out that this is what White should have played: 16.g5 hxg5 17.♘xe6 ♕c6 (17...♕d7?? 18.♕xh7! ♘xh7 19.♗h5+ g6 20.♗xg6 mate) 18.♕f5 ♗xe6 19.♕xe6 ♕d7 20.♕b3 ♘c6 21.♕xb7 ♕xb7 22.♖xb7 ♘d4 23.♗d1, and Black has

serious problems in the endgame.

16...♘c6 17.♘xc6 ♕xc6



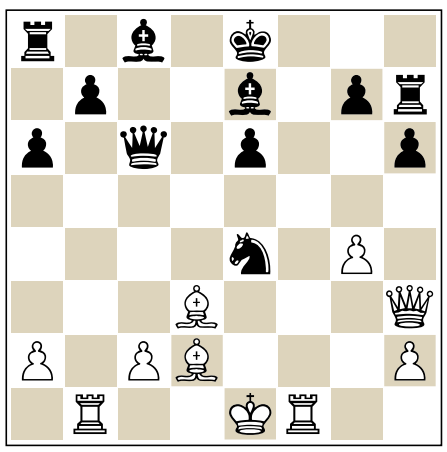
18.e5?!

Black is alright after 18.♗d3 e5 19.♘d5 ♗e6 20.♖b6 ♕d7, but not the cowardly 20...♗xd5 21.♖xc6 ♗xc6, because of 22.♖xf6! gxf6 (22...♗xf6 23.g5) 23.♕h5+. However, 18.♖b3!, as suggested by Alexander Sergeevich Nikitin, was very unpleasant, when Black faces difficult times: for example, 18...♗d7 (18...e5 19.♘d5) 19.♗d3 0-0-0 (19...e5 20.♘d5) 20.e5 dxe5 21.♖xf6 gxf6 22.♗e4.

18...dxe5 19.♗d3

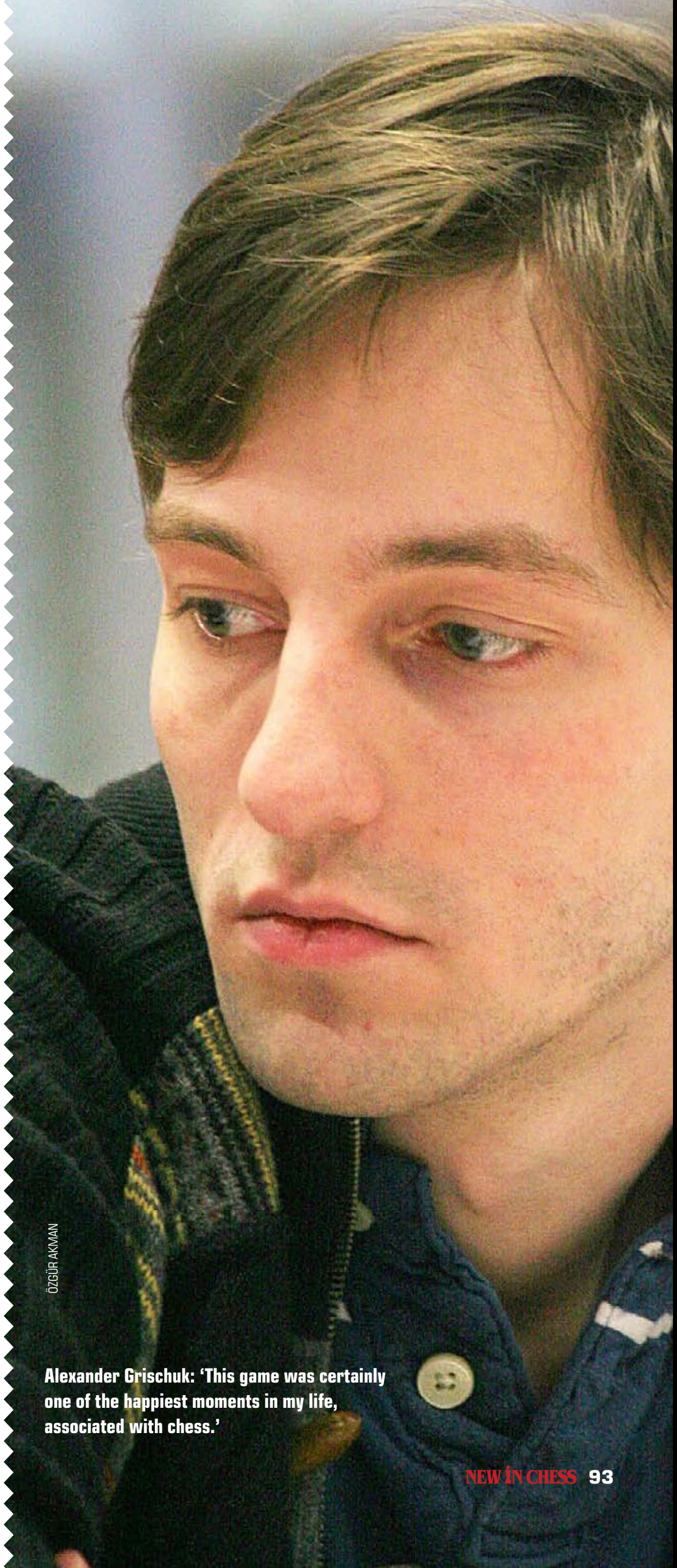
19.♗f3 is interesting, when 19...e4 loses in view of 20.♘xe4 ♘xe4 21.♕h5+ ♔d7 22.♖d1 ♕xc2 23.♗b4+ ♔c7 24.♕e5+ ♔b6 25.♗xe7, but after 19...♕c4 20.♕g2 (20.♖b3 e4) 20...♖h8 21.♖b3 ♖f8 Black holds on, and the position is completely unclear.

19...e4 20.♘xe4 ♘xe4



21.♕h5+

The computer recommends winning the exchange by 21.♕e3 ♘xd2 22.♗g6+ ♔d8 23.♕xd2+ ♗d7 24.♗xh7, but it itself agrees



ÖZGÜR AKMAN

Alexander Grischuk: 'This game was certainly one of the happiest moments in my life, associated with chess.'

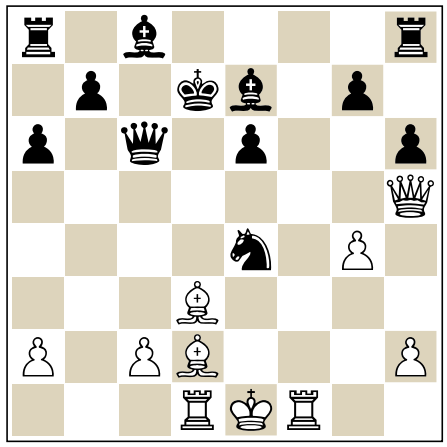
that after 24...♖c8 position is unclear.

21...♔d7 Vugar made this series of moves very quickly, and I couldn't understand how I could be losing by force. But here he stopped to think.

22.♖d1 As is usual in such positions, most variations lead to perpetual check, for instance, 22.♕f7 ♖h8 (or 22...♘xd2 23.♖d1 ♖h8 24.♖xd2 ♕c5 25.♕xg7 ♖d8 26.♖f7 ♕e3+ 27.♔d1 ♔c6 28.♖xe7 ♕g1+ 29.♔e2 ♕xh2+) 23.♗b4 ♘d6 24.♕xg7 ♖e8 25.♗g6 ♔d8 26.♖b3 ♗d7 27.♗a5+ ♔c8 28.♖c3 ♗h4+ 29.♔d1 ♘c4 30.♗xe8 ♗xe8 31.♖f8 ♕h1+ 32.♔e2 ♕e4+ 33.♔f1 ♕h1+.

22...♖h8

The commentators called this move 'cool-headed', but the point is that to find a 'cool-headed' move in this position is rather difficult.



23.♗f4??

A strange mistake. White should have played 23.♖f7 ♘d6 24.♗b4 ♖f8 25.♗xd6 ♖xf7 26.♕xf7 ♕c3+ 27.♔e2 ♔xd6 28.♗g6+ ♔c7 29.♕xe7+ ♔b8 30.♗e4 ♔a7, and to judge by the assessment of computer programs, the game should again end in perpetual check to one of the kings.

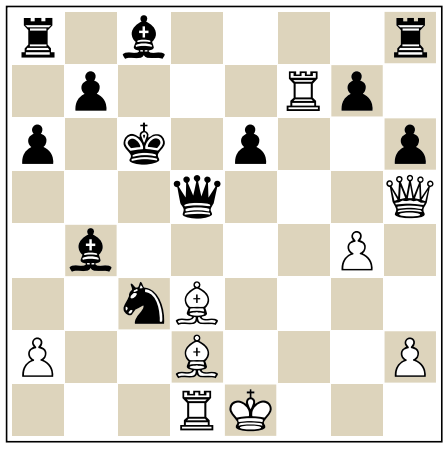
23...♗b4+ 24.c3 ♘xc3

I thought that 24...♗xc3+ 25.♔e2 ♗d4 would also win, but the move in the game seemed safer to me.

25.♗d2 ♕d5

Here I already realized what Gashimov had devised, but I could not believe that it would pose Black any serious problems.

26.♖f7+ ♔c6



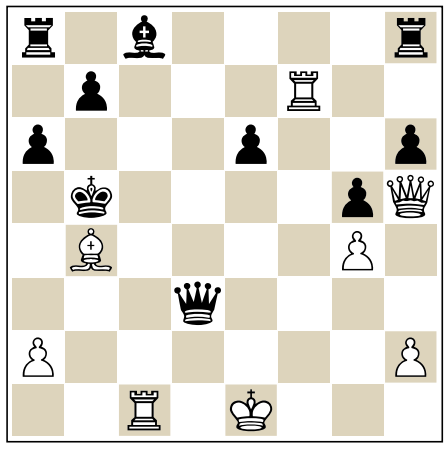
27.♖c1!!

Sacrificing a second piece!

27...♔b6

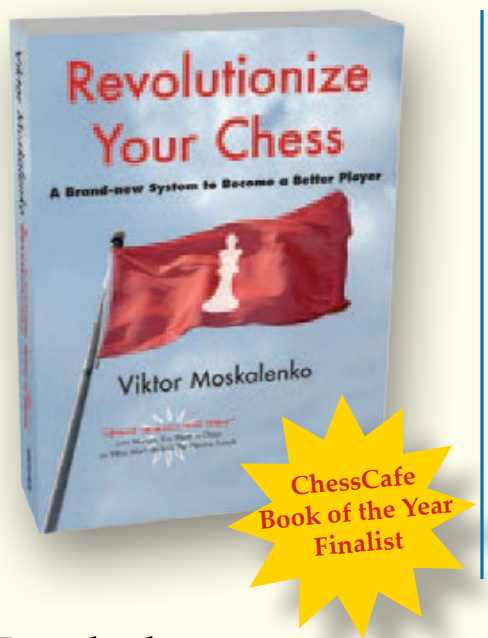
It was totally impractical to play 27...♕xd3 28.♕e5, when here Black has to find a lengthy series of only moves: 28...a5 29.♖xc3+ ♗xc3 30.♖c7+ ♔b6 31.♖xc3 ♕b1+ 32.♖c1 ♕b5 33.♕d4+ ♔a6 34.♖c5 ♕b1+ 35.♖c1 ♕b6 36.♖c5 ♖d8 37.♕c4+ ♔a7 38.♖xa5+ ♔b8 39.♗f4+ ♖d6 40.♗xd6+ ♕xd6 41.♖xa8+ ♔xa8 42.♕xc8+ ♔a7, and in this queen endgame there should not be any great problems in converting the extra pawn.

However, both the strongest and the most practical was 27...g5! 28.♗xc3, and now not the line I was considering – 28...♕e5+ 29.♔d2 ♗xc3+ 30.♖xc3+ ♔b6 31.♕h3 – but 28...♕xd3! 29.♗xb4+ ♔b5!,



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

when the white queen is shut in, and Black launches a decisive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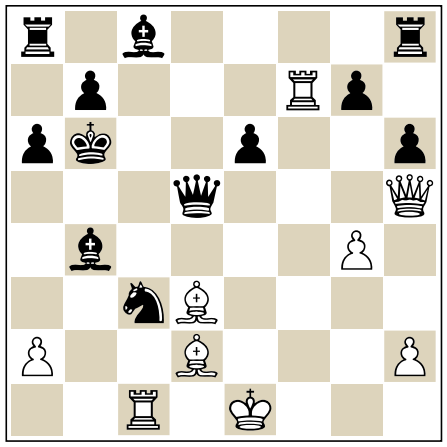
counterattack (with his king on b5!): 30.♗d2 (30.♗c3 e5) 30...♖d8 31.a4+ ♔b6 32.♖d1 ♔a7.



28.♗e3+

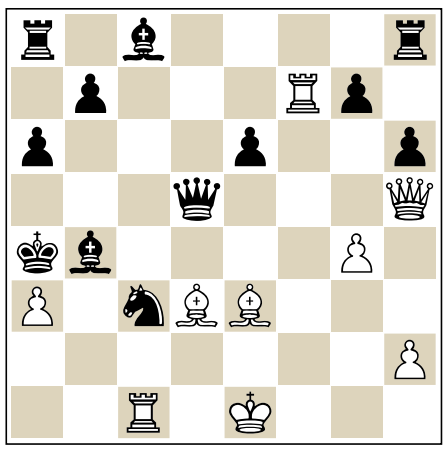
28.♖xc3 ♗xc3 29.♗xc3 was inadequate:

A) 29...♖d8 30.♕xd5 ♖xd5 (30...exd5 31.♗d4+ ♔c6 32.♖xg7) 31.♗e4 ♖g5 32.h3;

B) 29...♕xh5 30.gxh5 e5 31.♖xg7 ♔c5 32.♗e4 a5, and Black should win.

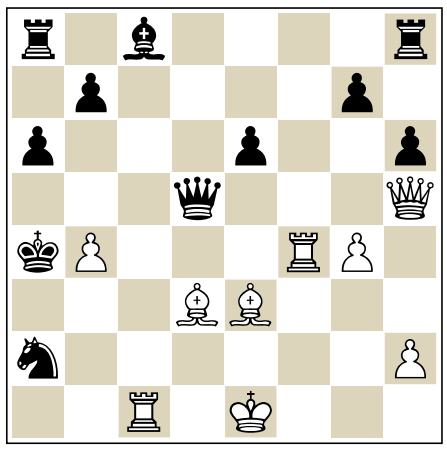
28...♔a5 29.a3 ♔a4

29...♗xa3 was altogether unconvincing: 30.♖xc3 ♗b4 31.♗d2 ♕xh5 32.gxh5 ♗xc3 33.♗xc3+ ♔b6 34.♗d4+ ♔c6 35.♗e4+ ♔d6 36.♗xg7 ♖d8 37.♗xh6, and the h-pawn is very dangerous.



30.axb4?

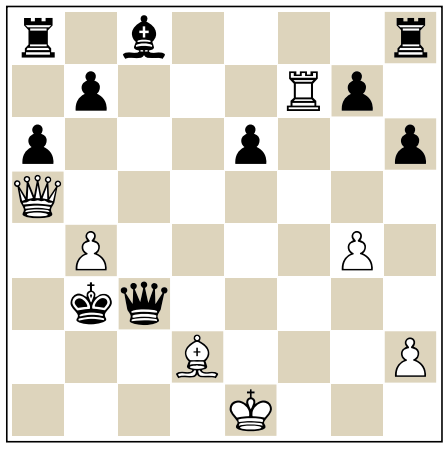
The decisive mistake. After 30.♖f4! Black would have had to play pretty accurately. He must play 30...♘a2+! (only a draw results from 30...♕xh5 31.♖xc3! ♕h4+ 32.♔d1 ♕e7 33.♗c2+ ♔a5 34.axb4+ ♕xb4 35.♖xb4 ♔xb4 36.♗d2 ♔b5 37.♗d3+ ♔b6 38.♗e3+ ♔a5 39.♗d2) 31.axb4



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

31...♕xh5 (31...♘xc1 32.b5+ ♔b3 33.♗c4+ ♕xc4 34.♖xc4 ♘d3+ 35.♔d2 ♔xc4 36.♕f7!) 32.b5+ ♔a3 33.gxh5 ♘xc1 34.♗xc1+ ♔b3 35.♗d2 ♗d7 36.bxa6 bxa6 37.♖f3 ♔a4 38.♖f4+ ♔a3 39.♖f3 ♖hf8 40.♖g3 ♔b2 41.♗c4 ♖fc8 42.♖b3+ ♔a2 43.♖c3+ ♖xc4 44.♖xc4 ♗b5 45.♖c7 ♖f8, and Black would appear to be winning, but it would not greatly surprise me if some improvement for White were to be found in this variation.

30...♕xd3 31.♕a5+ ♔b3 32.♖xc3+ ♕xc3+ 33.♗d2



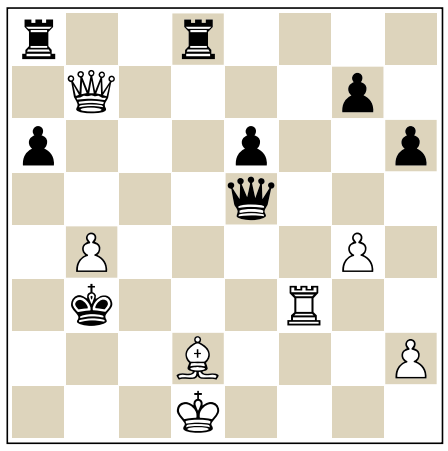
33...b6!

Now much becomes clear. Apparently, Vugar overlooked this move.

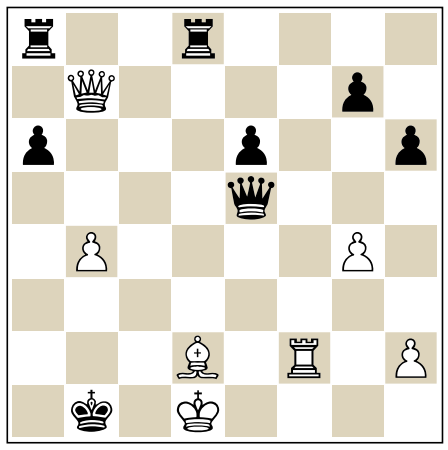
34.♕xb6 ♕e5+ 35.♔d1 ♗b7

I very much wanted to make this move, finally completing my development. The only thing that deterred me was the realization that the computer would not approve of it. Even so, in the end cowardice overcame greed.

36.♕xb7 ♖hd8 37.♖f3+



37...♔a2! Curiously, no one noticed that after 37...♔b2 38.♕xa8! ♖xa8 39.♗c1+ ♔a2 40.♖a3+ ♔b1 41.♖b3+ the game ends in perpetual check. Alas, after 38.♕xa8 Black wins by both 38...♕d4 and 38...♕d6, and even 38...♕c7. **38.♖f2 ♔b1** Touchdown!



39.♕f3 ♖ac8 40.♕b3+ ♕b2 41.♕xb2+ ♔xb2

White resigned.

Our game concluded when the match score was 1-1 (Malakhov had won against Mamedov, but Morozevich had lost to Mamedyarov). Also still in progress was the game Yakovenko-Radjabov, in which White had a definite advantage in the endgame and could move back and forwards for 100 moves. For some forty minutes Mitia did not make a move, awaiting the outcome of our game. When White resigned, he quickly forced a draw, giving us victory in the match, and opening the way to the title of world champions. This game was certainly one of the happiest moments in my life, associated with chess.

ROWSON'S REVIEWS

Dynamic Nostalgia

Now you are telling me you are not nostalgic.
Well give me another word for it, you who are so good with words.
– Joan Baez to Bob Dylan, in her song 'Diamonds and Rust'

Kasparov once praised the editors of this magazine by saying 'You are everything your reader wants you to be, that's why you are so successful'. He also remarked that New In Chess was perhaps, on occasion, a little too nostalgic, with a clear fondness for essays on players from bygone eras. The editors may not thank me for raising this issue again, but I mention it because I think the nostalgia is in many ways the heart of the magazine's charm. New In Chess is not just good games, quality annotations and original photographs. Somehow the pages have weight and meaning that other chess magazines do not carry, and that is because of what might be called dynamic nostalgia, in which the backward glance is not wistful, but rather a reminder of why we continue to care about modern chess. Indeed, the richest material manages to remain timeless, because it dares to explore chess not just as a game, but as a form of life, manifest as intimate portraits, and galvanising stories that serve as a record of cultural evolution.

Forgive me, for it is somewhat incestuous to review one's own magazine, but this general appraisal helps to contextualise my appreciation for ***New in Chess: The First 25 Years – An Anthology, 1984-2009***, edited by Steve Giddins. If you are reading this magazine, you probably enjoy New In Chess, so you will not be surprised to hear that the selected material offers a feast of dynamic nostalgia.

I first came to know about New In Chess when I was a young teenager, from Mike Shepherd, a geologist by profession, and the strongest player in my home town of Aberdeen. He would sometimes drive me home from the chess club, and he invariably had a New In Chess magazine in his car, which he would occasionally lend me when we reached my house. It was a small gesture, but along with a thousand and one other twists of fate, this taste of New In Chess was instrumental in motivating me to become a grandmaster. The main value for me was sensing this struggle for power at the elite level, and reading the interviews with the top players whom I began to admire. I particularly remember the issue when Fischer re-emerged after twenty years of exile, because I had heard the story on television a few weeks previously and wasn't sure what to make of it, but clarity emerged while sitting in the back seat of Mike's car. He threw that distinctively shaped magazine to me from the front and said: 'Kasparov is not being very nice to Fischer, he's calling him an Alien.' I read the interview at home, and hoped Kasparov was wrong to fear that Fischer was destroying his own legend.

At that point in time, as a young aspiring player, New In Chess helped to make the game seem not merely interesting or exciting, but also meaningful. The interviews, games and the analysis together gave you a sense that the results of these super tournaments mattered, and they mattered because they reflected a will-to-power struggle that is as inspiring as it is tragic. Indeed, Jan Timman once said, probably in New In Chess, that only the belief that your life is 'an overpowering epic' can drive a player to the summit of chess. New In Chess manages to reflect that sort of idea, the personal struggle for ascendancy manifest in chess moves, and documented in algebraic notation. At the same time, the portraits of past masters, often by Hans Ree or Genna Sosonko, highlight the more tragic and comic aspects of the game.

A few years later I took a year before university to study chess, and did so at the home of FM Donald Holmes, who had several old issues of New In Chess. I remember suffering from a bout of insomnia and reading an interview with Gelfand in the hope that it might send me to sleep. In fact it was very engaging, and I was struck by his claim that it was really crucial to fight hard in the first round of a tournament, to get into the event, even if you

lose in the process. I still remember this advice in my first round games. I also remember Ivanchuk saying you have to 'believe in your talisman', which led me to look up 'talisman' in the dictionary, but although I have mystical leanings, I am not superstitious by nature.

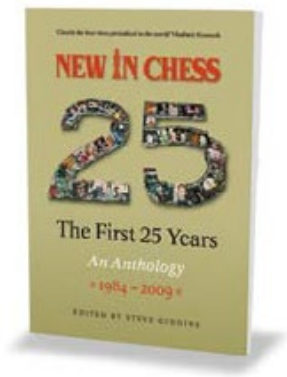
The anthology is almost 400 pages long, and spans 25 years, so I will simply share with the reader the ideas and verbal vignettes that made the strongest impression. First, I recommend you read the interview with Tim Krabbé, who seems to be slightly mad, in the best possible sense. The following three quotes should help to justify this claim:

'Several Grandmasters even now tell you they learnt to play chess with very odd rules. Sosonko once told me that he had learnt chess from his mother, who taught him White always begins with d2-d4 and e2-e4 as a double first move. I myself have learnt chess with the rule that if you got your king to the other side you were allowed to choose five new pieces.'

'I have never looked for excuses. I like to quote Hans Ree, here, who simply said: "Chess is beautiful enough to waste your life on." To me, that sums it up. Once you start looking for excuses, you will end up needing an excuse for being happy.'

'When I imagine Troitzky in his Siberian forest, surrounded by howling wolves, analysing night after night whether king plus four knights can always beat king plus queen (laughs exuberantly), that is great. That is what chess is all about, only you have to be a chess player to appreciate it. How can you explain to a non-chessplayer that within chess there is the little world of endgame studies within which you have the even tinier world of theoretical major minor endgames, within which there is a micro-cosmos populated by utter madmen analysing four knights against queen?'

Then there is 'The impossible Challenge' by Tony Miles, in which he recounts, at considerable length, how he won Tilburg while playing most of the event on a stretcher. Towards the end of the event, some players didn't want to play a supine Miles at all, and it became clear to everybody that



New In Chess - The First 25 Years
edited by Steve Giddins

Hübner and Miles would agree a quick draw. They planned to make just two moves, but five moves were encouraged, and the arbiter, Geurt Gijssen, said: 'Please make the five moves sensible.' Miles then shares the following:

'Crossing the road to the restaurant I met Hübner coming the other way. I told him of the latest request. "Oh no," he said, "it was my intention that the moves should be utterly stupid." "Well, okay," I said, "I'll play sensible moves, you do what you like, and I'll offer a draw on move five".'

Tony Miles
Robert Hübner
Tilburg 1985 (12)

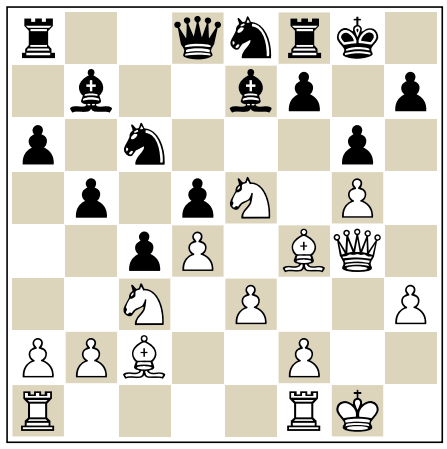
1.d4 e5 I had had the slight fear that Robert might really do the job properly with 1...f6 and 2...g5. I had two ideas against this. The first was to avoid 2.e4. The second, which I would probably have adopted, was to play 2.e4 g5 then pick up my queen, slam it down on h5 and then 'j'adoube' it to g4. **2.dxe5 ♕h4 3.♘f3 ♕a4 4.♘c3 ♕a5 5.e4** Drawn.

Not much of a game, you might think, but in its subversive spirit it reminded me of the following prearranged draw by two American juniors unkindly paired together in an international event.

Jennie Frenklakh
Jennifer Shahade
Menorca Wch U-16 1996

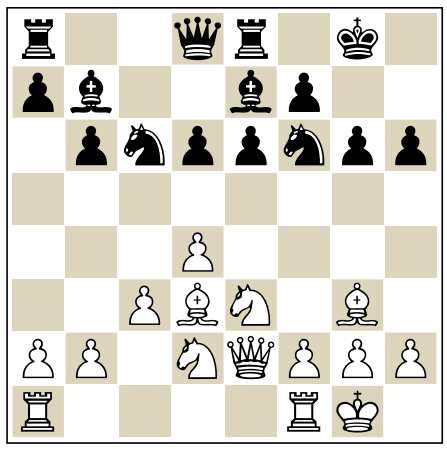
1.h3 f5 2.d4 e5 3.♕d3 f4 So far, so weird, but it gets much worse, or better, depending on how you look at it. **4.♕g3!** The exclamation mark is for audacity, these girls were representing their country after all. **4...e4!** This time the exclamation mark is for resisting the temptation to call off the prearranged draw and take the queen. **5.♕h2 ♗e7 6.a4 a5 7.♖a3** With the obvious attention to swing the rook to the kingside. **7...♗h4!?** A prophylactic move, but not one you'll find in the Dvoretsky/Yusupov literature. **8.♖g3 e3 9.f3 ♕e7** Although Black failed to take White's queen, she has shown good positional sense. However, White is not without hope: **10.c4 ♕b4+ 11.♘d2 d6 12.c5** The beginning of a kind of counter-attack, urgently trying to give away legal moves. **12...♗e6 13.c6 ♗b3** Taking away the remaining square from the white king. **14.d5** Black has various ways to win now, but first wanted to keep her pawn structure intact. **14...b6** And there we have it. No draw offer, and not even a fabricated three-fold repetition, but good old stalemate, after just 14 moves.

More seriously, on reading Timman's notes on a crushing Miles win against Spassky, I was reminded of one of my own games against Miles:



Miles-Spassky
Montilla 1978
position after 15...g6

16.♖ad1 ♘g7 17.h4 ♗b4 18.♘d7! ♗c8 19.♘xd5 ♔h8 20.♘5f6 ♖a7 21.d5! 'Now the point of move 16 is revealed' – Timman. **♘e7 22.♗e5 ♖xd7 23.h5 ♖xd5 24.♕f4 ♖xd1 25.♖xd1 ♕a5 26.♘e8 f6 27.gxf6 ♔g8 28.♘xg7** 1-0



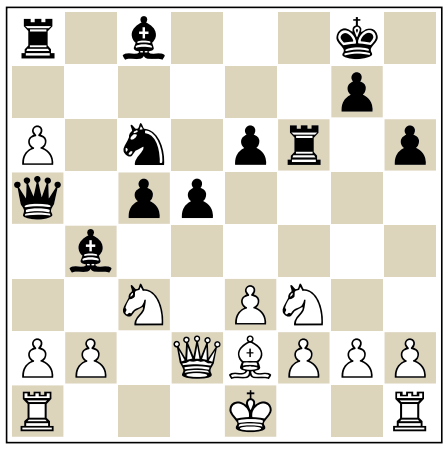
Miles-Rowson
West Bromwich 4NCL 1996/97
position after 15...g6

At this moment Miles played **16.♖ad1**, and after the game, which I won, he remarked: 'I always put my rook on this square in these positions and it never seems to do anything.' Reflecting on Miles-Spassky above, I wonder if Miles 'always' put his rook on d1 because he was subconsciously trying to relive a particularly sweet game where it proved to be vitally useful.

I have nothing against Spassky, but he was the victim of another piece of accurate calculation in the following game, with selected comments by Timman. This game was the icing on the cake of Sosonko's exquisite account of Tal's life, called 'My Misha':

Boris Spassky
Mikhail Tal
Tallinn 1973

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♗g5 h6 5.♗h4 c5 6.d5 b5 7.dxe6 fxe6 8.cxb5 d5 9.e3 0-0 10.♘f3 ♕a5 11.♗xf6 ♖xf6 12.♕d2 a6 13.bxa6 ♘c6 14.♗e2



14...d4! 15.exd4 ♖xf3 16.♗xf3 cxd4 17.0-0 dxc3 18.bxc3 ♗xc3 19.♕d6 'Suddenly things have stopped looking so rosy for Black. But here comes the point of the combination.' **19...♖xa6 20.♗xc6 ♗b4!** 'The point of the combination. White has to leave his king's bishop to its own devices.' **21.♕b8 ♖xc6 22.♖ac1 ♗c5** 'This too, had to be calculated on move 14. Black shields the c-file.' **23.♖c2 ♕a4 24.♕b3 ♕f4! 25.♕g3 ♕f5 26.♖fc1 ♗b7! 27.♕f3 ♕g5 28.♕b3 ♖c7 29.g3 ♗xf2+!** 'The long awaited execution.' **30.♔xf2 ♕f6+ 31.♔e1 ♕e5+ 32.♔f1 ♗a6+ 33.♔g1 ♕d4+ 34.♔g2 ♕e4+ 35.♔g1 ♗b7 36.h4 ♕h1+ 37.♔f2 ♖f7+ 38.♔e2 ♕e4+** 'The hunt is done. White resigned. A masterpiece of accurate calculation.'

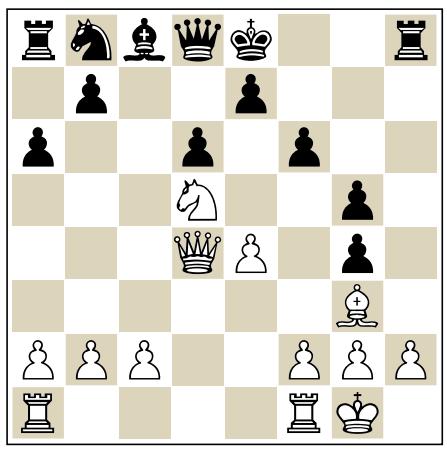
Steve Giddins seems to have done a good job of selecting the material, though I should point out that he made a strange mistake of printing one of my review columns 'Objecting to Objectivity' with the title from another column called 'The Right Kind of Smoothness'. He begins each selected piece with a brief introduction, for instance:

'New in Chess has always followed the policy of letting players have their say, however controversial or outspoken they may be. Over the years, this has made for some memorable contributions, not all of which make comfortable reading, but none of which can be faulted for their entertainment value. The next piece is one such. Valery Salov has long since withdrawn from the chess world, but re-reading the following pages, one cannot help but think what a loss he was, as both player and polemicist.'

This contribution was extensive, covering politics and history more than chess, so I have just shared one particularly striking comment, suggesting some positions are so bad that you can't even look at them:

Alexey Shirov
Valery Salov
Wijk aan Zee 1998

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e3 ♘g4 7.♗g5 h6 8.♗h4 g5 9.♗g3 ♗g7 10.♗e2 h5 11.♗xg4 hxg4 12.0-0 ♗xd4 13.♕xd4 f6 14.♘d5



'In the post-Monicagate style of Hilary and Bill or the pre-PCA style of Vasily Ivanchuk I was trying to avoid any visual contact with my position, not believing that such

irreparable damage could have been self-inflicted after only 13 moves.'

Anand's account of his first major victory against Kasparov opens with: '**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2** These days Garry prefers the hyperaggressive 3.exd5 of course.'

In the same hyperaggressive spirit, in 1993 Kasparov answered a question on whether his friendship with Short lacked credibility, by showing his love for hyperbolic analogies: 'In the Second World War it was no secret that Churchill and Stalin had personal and ideological differences, but when the moment was there they joined forces against a mutual enemy.'

After Fischer's death New In Chess editor Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam visited Iceland, and gave a remarkably sensitive account of the time Fischer spent there at the end of his life. One of Fischer's Icelandic friends, Helgi Olafsson, made that particularly poignant remark that 'It was a terrible burden to him, to be this famous chess player'.

Interviews with FIDE presidents are included, and I felt the following snippet reveals just how slippery a character Campomanes could be. Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam's question was: 'Do people have a chance of getting to know you if you're so very protective of your privacy?' Campo replies: 'You see, I don't bother to explain myself. I'm not a fellow to explain myself. I just do my work and that's all. Because this business of having coffee or a drink with the boys, this is not my cup of tea. I don't have to explain myself.' (I particularly like the idea that having coffee is not his cup of tea).

Ilyumzhinov's interview does not, alas, include a reference to his time with extraterrestrial life forms, but I did like the wonderfully vacuous nature of his reply to the question 'Which religious book has made the deepest impression on you?'. 'The Bible. Very interesting. Very interesting.'

Finally, the last section includes the editor's selection of his favourite answers to the 'Just Checking' questions. My favourites were Mig Greengard's answer to the question 'Best result ever?' '1990, when I got to third base with Jeanette Neybert on our first date.'

And to put things in perspective, I should end with Kramnik's answer to the seemingly innocent question 'Do you believe in the future of chess?' 'Well... to begin with let me say that I do not really believe in a future for mankind.'

Assuming Kramnik's prognosis was offered in jest, or at any rate that it does not take effect any time soon, I strongly advise you to seek out this anthology. I am sure that New In Chess's dynamic nostalgia will have a positive impact on your mood, and maybe even your chess.

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JAN TIMMAN

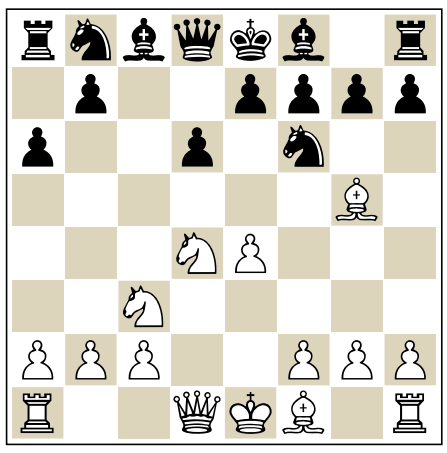
Najdorf with 6.♗g5 in Wijk aan Zee

In an article entitled 'Understanding the Najdorf Variation', Miguel Najdorf wrote the following: 'I began to play the Sicilian in the years 1937-1938, since it suited my temperament and my status as a player always looking for a fight. It was then that I put into practice the move 5...a6 which had been previously played by Opocensky and other masters. The frequency with which I employed it was the reason for its subsequently becoming widespread under my name.'

This article appeared in the book *The Najdorf Variation* in 1976. Somehow Najdorf's memory must have played tricks on him, because he played his own variation earlier than Opocensky, who used it for the first time in 1942. Before that time he usually played the Caro-Kann. Najdorf himself played it for the first time in the Buenos Aires Olympiad of 1939, in which he played second board for Poland, behind Tartakower. His opponent, the Dane Poulsen, reacted with 6.♗g5 e6 7.♕f3 and was ingloriously disposed of.

It was only in 1950 that Najdorf played his variation against world-class players: in Budapest, Smyslov responded with the quiet 6.♗e2, while Reshevsky went for the kingside fianchetto with 6.g3 in Dubrovnik. It was not before 1954 that the approach with 6.♗g5 gained in popularity, mainly because of Keres.

Earlier, the Estonian star had also preferred the quiet 6.♗e2, but in the Amsterdam Olympiad of 1954 he defeated Sajtar in the following spectacular manner:
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗g5



6...♘bd7 7.♗c4 e6 8.0-0 ♕c7 9.♗xe6! fxe6 10.♘xe6 ♕c4 11.♘d5 ♔f7 12.♗xf6 ♔xe6? 12...♘xf6 was the only option. **13.♗c3 ♘f6 14.♗xf6 gxf6 15.♘b6** and White won easily.

Such a game contributes hugely to the popularity of a variation. A year later it was followed by the three famous Gothenburg games: in Round 14, Keres, Geller and Spassky disposed of Najdorf, Panno and Pilnik, respectively. All three games were a Najdorf with 6.♗g5.

This set the trend. From the start of my career I always regarded it as obvious that the Najdorf had to be countered with 6.♗g5, although I was aware, of course, that Fischer opted for 6.♗c4, and sometimes 6.h3, and that Karpov preferred the quiet 6.♗e2. Great attacking players like Tal and Spassky remained loyal to 6.♗g5.

You had to know a lot as White, of course. The Polugaevsky variation with 7...b5 and the 'Poisoned Pawn' with 7...♕b6 could not be tackled without thorough preparation. In my early years as a professional I studied it relatively deeply, which yielded me a great number of victories.

In the late 1980s, things changed. Many variations of the Poisoned Pawn seemed to have been sucked dry, with the result that a draw seemed almost inevitable. Now you saw only white players intending to go for a draw opting for 6.♗g5. Most self-respecting players went for 6.♗e3, while Kasparov, who always ploughed his own opening furrow, usually used Fischer's weapon of 6.♗c4.

At the start of the present century, 6.♗g5 experienced a revival, although it is hard to say when exactly this started. In 2006, Radjabov won a rapid game against Anand in 16 moves, which was a clear sign that Black had not had it easy. Radjabov had reinforced an old Tal idea, and with the help of fast computers it became clear what dangers Black was exposed to in this line.

These days, a large number of top players use 6.♗g5: Anand, Shirov, Ponomariov, Radjabov, Ivanchuk, Gashimov and Alekseev play it with some regularity.

The recent Corus tournament also showed that this trend is

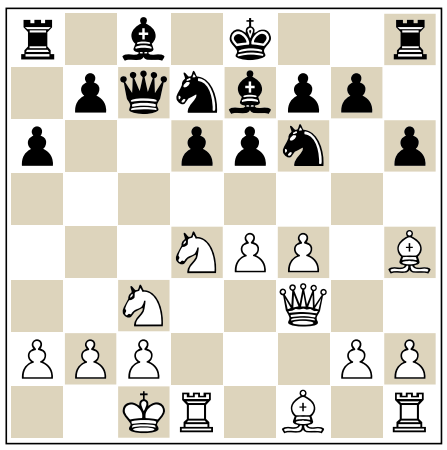
continuing. Only Leko and Dominguez stuck to 6.♗e3; both of them faced the Sicilian only once. In the main group, there were seven games with 6.♗g5, in the B-group there was one, but that, too, was a theoretically important battle.

And there wasn't a single game with the Poisoned Pawn. I find this strange, since I do not know exactly what the best way is for White to tackle this system. Apparently, no one at the highest level had the courage to try it, undoubtedly because the computers have found deep variations that are not satisfactory for Black.

In Wijk aan Zee, Smeets played the Najdorf with 6.♗g5 four times as White, while Van Wely was behind the black pieces three times. Nakamura and Ivanchuk played it both as White and as Black. In the final round, Shirov ventured into the theoretical discussion by going 6.♗g5 in his crucial game against Dominguez.

In Round 1, the game Smeets-Nakamura went as follows:

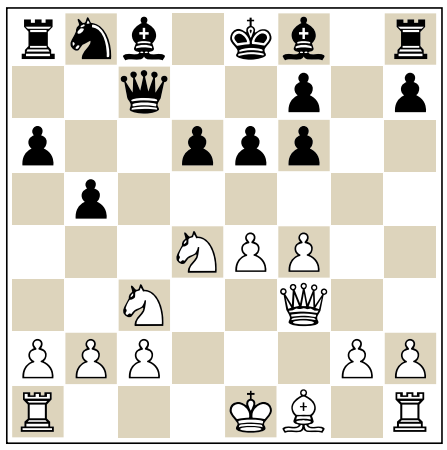
6.♗g5 e6 7.f4 ♗e7 8.♕f3 h6 9.♗h4 ♕c7 10.0-0-0 ♘bd7



and now White went for **11.f5**, giving the position a static character. After **11...e5 12.♘de2 b5 13.♗xf6 ♘xf6 14.♘d5** the position was roughly equal.

More ambitious is 11.♗g3, intending to advance the e-pawn. After 11...b5 12.e5 ♗b7 13.♕e2 dxe5 14.fxe5 ♘d5 a sharp battle with chances on both sides arises.

Two rounds later, Smeets, in his game against Ivanchuk, faced **7...♕c7**. The drawback of this queen move is that White can now swap on f6 and get a kind of Rauzer position in which he can attack Black's weakened pawn structure. White has a choice: he can play 8.♕f3 first and then take on f6, or turn things around and develop the queen to d2, as in the Rauzer. Smeets went for the former option. After **8.♕f3 b5 9.♗xf6 gxf6**



he faced another choice, a quite common one in the Sicilian: should he prevent the further advance of the b-pawn, or castle queenside at once?

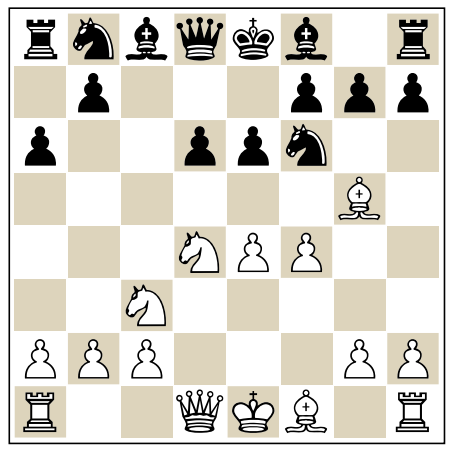
In Shirov-Papaioannou, European Team Championship, Novi Sad 2009, White went for queenside castling, and after **10.0-0-0 b4 11.♘ce2 h5 12.♘g3 h4 13.♘h5 ♘d7 14.g4 ♗b7 15.♕e2 0-0-0** a sharp battle with chances on both sides arose.

Smeets played **10.a3**, and after **10...♗b7 11.♗e2 h5 12.0-0-0 ♘d7 13.f5 e5 14.♘b3 ♖c8 15.♔b1 ♘b6 16.♖d3 ♗h6! 17.♕xh5 ♔e7** Black had compensation for the pawn. I am not so sure that f4-f5 is such a good idea without White having firm control of square d5.

Against Smeets, Dominguez went for a variation that immediately leads to a hyper-sharp battle, but although the game itself was spectacular enough, it added very little to the existing theory.

SI 4.6 – B96
Jan Smeets
Leinier Dominguez
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (7)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗g5 e6 7.f4



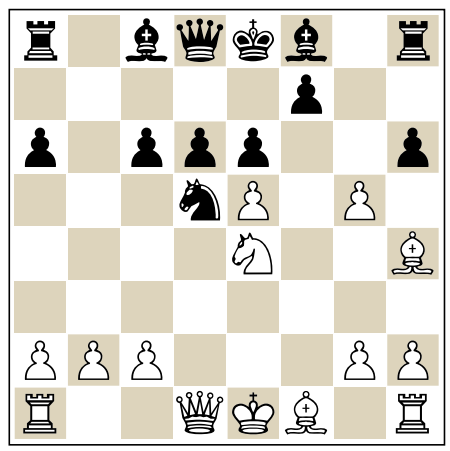
7...♘c6!?

A provocative move, introduced in Keres-Letelier, Santiago 1957.

8.♘xc6

This game continued 8.e5 h6 9.♗h4 g5 10.fxg5 ♘h7? 11.♘xc6 bxc6 12.exd6 ♘xg5 13.♕d4 ♖g8 14.0-0-0, and White was winning. This was not an encouraging example for black players. It took more than four decades to become clear that 10...♘d5 is playable for Black.

8...bxc6 9.e5 h6 10.♗h4 g5 11.fxg5 ♘d5 12.♘e4



12...♕b6!

The only correct defence. Black must act as actively as possible.

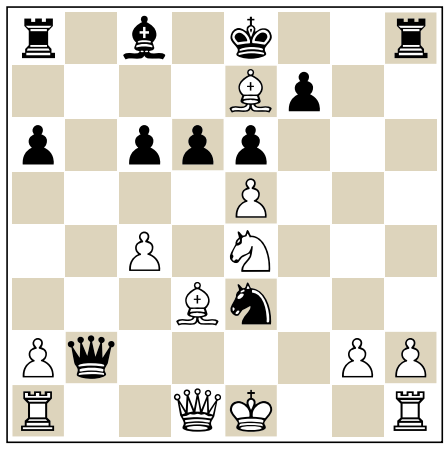
13.♗d3 hxg5 14.♗xg5 ♕xb2 15.c4 ♗e7!

NEW IN CHESS

Loek van Wely said that in his preparation he had concentrated exclusively on the Najdorf. A typical case of 'King Loek' humour, we guess.

This, too, is an important move. But it was already known.

16.♗xe7 ♘e3



17.♕c1

The first new move. Known were 17.exd6 and 17.♕f3, after which Black continues to check on g2 and e3.

Smeets is prepared to make a double rook sacrifice, with the result that at some stage not Black but White will be forced to draw by perpetual check.

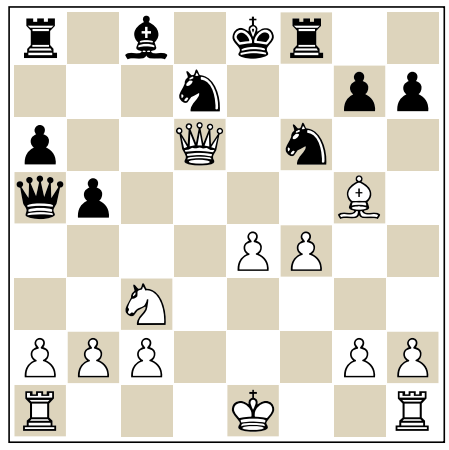
17...♘xg2+ 18.♔d1 ♘e3+ 19.♔e1 ♘g2+ 20.♔d1 ♘e3+ 21.♕xe3 ♕xa1+ 22.♔d2 ♕xh1 23.♗xd6 ♖xh2+ 24.♗e2 ♕b1 25.♘f6+ ♔d8 26.♕d4 c5 27.♗xc5+ ♔c7 28.♕d6+ ♔b7 29.♕e7+ ♔c6 30.♕d6+ Draw.

White will have to start looking for reinforcements at an earlier stage. In this respect, the game Azarov-Tihonov, played in the Belarus championship shortly after Wijk aan Zee, is of theoretical importance.

After **11.♗f2** (instead of 11.fxg5) **11...♘d5 12.♘e4 gxf4 13.c4 ♕a5+ 14.♕d2 ♕xd2+ 15.♔xd2 dxe5! 16.cxd5 exd5** Black had sufficient counterplay on the strength of his mighty pawn structure. Remarkably enough, neither Smeets, nor Azarov went for 11.fxg5 ♘d5 12.♘e4 ♕b6 and now 13.c3! instead of 13.♗d3. After 13...♕xb2 14.♖b1 ♕xa2 15.g6! the situation is critical for Black, as Kuzmin shows in Yearbook 94. This is probably the reason why Dominguez played a different system against Shirov in the final round.

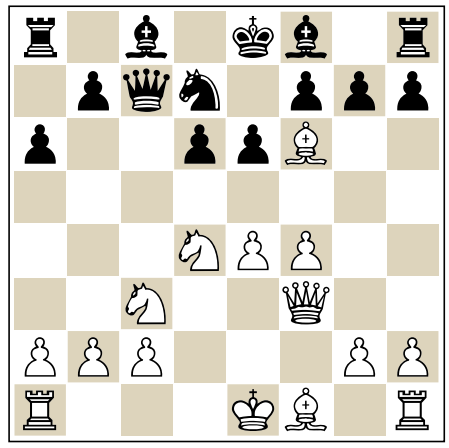
In the other five games with 6.♗g5 in Wijk aan Zee, Black went for a system in which the queen's knight is developed to d7 at an early stage. This system was mainly popularized by Gelfand: Black prevents his f-pawn from being doubled, and then wants to take his queen to c7 for the traditional advance b7-b5.

Naiditsch-Negi was of theoretical importance. White went for developing his king's bishop to c4: **6.♗g5 e6 7.f4 ♘bd7 8.♗c4** In my report of the European Championship in Budva (see New In Chess 2009/3) I have discussed this system fairly extensively. The idea is to meet 8...♕b6 with 9.♗xf6 ♘xf6 10.♗b3. Negi played **8...b5**, and this was followed by the sacrifice on e6 in the style of Keres-Sajtar. After **9.♗xe6 fxe6 10.♘xe6 ♕a5 11.♘xf8 ♖xf8 12.♕xd6** Negi came with a new defence, which he had undoubtedly worked out at home:



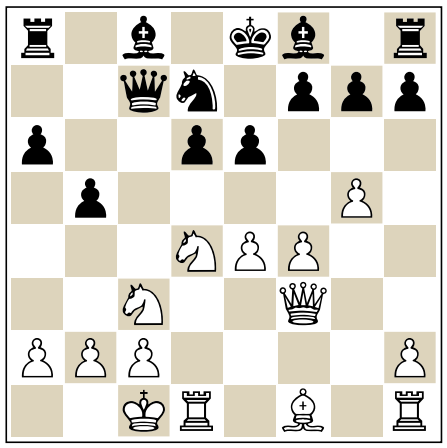
12...♔f7! 13.e5 b4! Now White has a choice between 14.e6+ and 14.exf6, but in either case Black will have sufficient counterplay.

In Nakamura-Van Wely (Round 2) White went for the old-fashioned approach with 8.♕f3 but after 8...♕c7 he continued 9.♗xf6.



For someone unfamiliar with this line this must seem quite strange: White often withdraws his bishop from g5 to h4 here if Black plays h7-h6, but now he swaps voluntarily on f6. The determining factor is how Black can take back on f6. He will only recapture with the g-pawn if he has no other choice. Taking back with the bishop usually is Black's best option. If the knight on f6 takes, White always has the possibility of quickly going e4-e5 or g4-g5.

The game continued as follows: **9...♘xf6 10.g4 b5 11.g5 ♘d7 12.0-0-0**



and now, after 12...♗e7, a main line of this system would have arisen via transposition.

Players who opt for the system with 7...♘bd7 and 8...♕c7, however, are usually not prepared to switch to the system with 7...♗e7 and 8...♕c7. In this position, Black has also tried various different moves.

The most important one is **12...b4**, after which White is forced to make the traditional piece sacrifice on d5. In Radjabov-Volokitin, Biel 2006, White was better after **13.♘d5! exd5 14.exd5 ♗b7 15.♕e4+ ♗e7 16.♘f5 ♘c5 17.♘xg7+ ♔f8 18.♕d4 b3 19.♗c4**.

In Sjugirov-Papin, Lipetsk 2008, White did something different by playing **15.♗h3** (instead of 15.♕e4). After **15...♗e7 16.♖he1 g6 17.♕e2 ♘b6 18.f5 ♘xd5 19.f6 0-0 20.fxe7 ♖fe8 21.♕d2 ♘xe7 22.♕xb4** he was also better.

In Volokitin-Petrosian, Dresden 2007, Black varied with **12...♗b7**, and after **13.♗h3** he could have followed in the footsteps of Sjugirov-Papin with 13...b4. Instead, he continued **13...♖c8 14.♖he1 ♕c4**, which White met calmly with **15.♗f1 ♕c5 16.a3**. White was better, mainly because of the vulnerable position of the king.

Against Nakamura, Van Wely went for another line again: **12...♘c5 13.a3 ♖b8** The combination of Black's two last moves is very unfortunate indeed. Nakamura struck with **14.b4 ♘d7 15.♘d5**, and it is self-evident that the piece sac is made here under far more favourable circumstances. The bad position of Black's queen's rook in particular at once makes for a critical situation. Black is hopelessly lost. To my surprise, I later learned that Nakamura had prepared this piece sac in these circumstances in his hotel room. There are many more crucial and more difficult lines in this system. Nor did I understand why White got the daily prize for this walk-over.

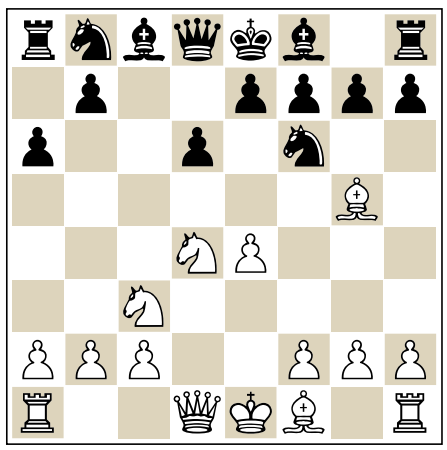
Ivanchuk had apparently followed the Van Wely debacle with interest, and explains himself what happened in their game.

NOTES BY

Vasily Ivanchuk

SI 6.1 – B96
Vasily Ivanchuk
Loek van Wely
Wijk aan Zee 2010 (4)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗g5



I noticed that Nakamura played this variation with black against Smeets, and that the next day he employed it with white against Van Wely and won confidently. I decided to make use of his experience, and it turned out very well.

6...e6 7.f4 ♘bd7 8.♕e2

A fashionable continuation, which nowadays has good statistics for White.

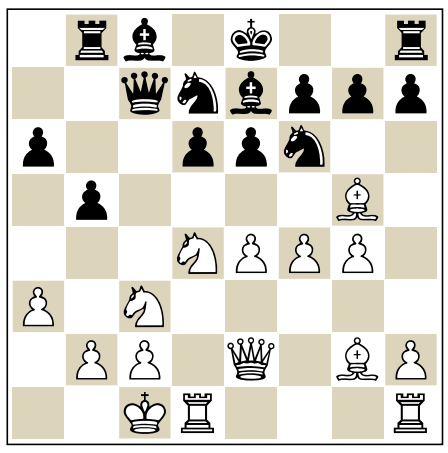
8...♕c7

Loek was obviously not prepared for the given variation, since he thought for a long time over every move.

9.0-0-0 b5 10.a3 ♗e7 11.g4 ♖b8

In reaching this theoretical position, my opponent had already spent a mass of time, and yet the play is only just beginning in such positions. The following is considered a solid continuation: 11...♗b7 12.♖g1 h6 13.♗h4 g5 14.fxg5 ♘h7 15.♗f2 hxg5 16.♘f3 ♘e5 17.♗d4 f6 18.h4 0-0-0 19.h5 ♘f8 20.♗f2 ♘xf3 21.♕xf3 ♘d7 22.♖g3 ♘e5 23.♕e3 ♔d7 24.♕b6 ♕xb6 25.♗xb6, with sharp play, Wang Hao-Li, Beijing 2009.

12.♗g2

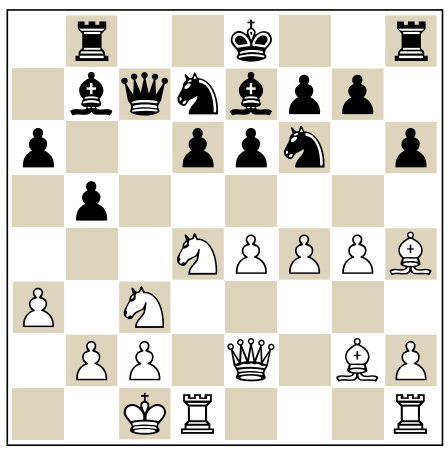


12...b4?

This is considered dubious. Black's premature attack is not at all justified. 12...h6 is better, after which I give some possible variations:

A) 13.♗xf6 ♗xf6 14.h4 b4 15.axb4 ♖xb4 16.e5 dxe5 17.♘c6 ♖xf4 18.♘e4 0-0 19.g5 ♗b7 20.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 21.gxf6 ♗xc6 22.fxg7 ♖c8 favours Black;

B) 13.♗h4 ♗b7



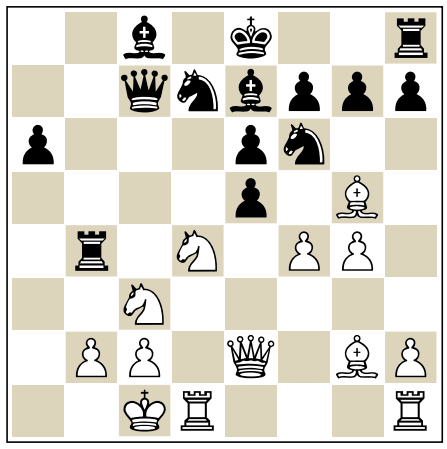
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

14.♖he1 (an important alternative is 14.♖hg1) 14...♘b6 15.♔b1, e.g. 15...0-0 16.g5 hxg5 17.fxg5 ♘fd7 18.♕h5 ♘e5 19.♖e3 g6 20.♕e2 ♘bc4, with chances for both sides. Finally, 12...♗b7 does not fit at all well with the rook on b8, and the move looks illogical, but it has a right to exist: 13.♔b1 ♕c4 14.♕e1 h6 15.♗h4 g5 16.fxg5 hxg5 17.♗xg5 b4 18.axb4 ♕xb4 19.♘b3 ♘xg4 20.♗xe7 ♔xe7 21.♖d4, and White is better.

13.axb4 ♖xb4 14.e5!

An important breakthrough.

14...dxe5

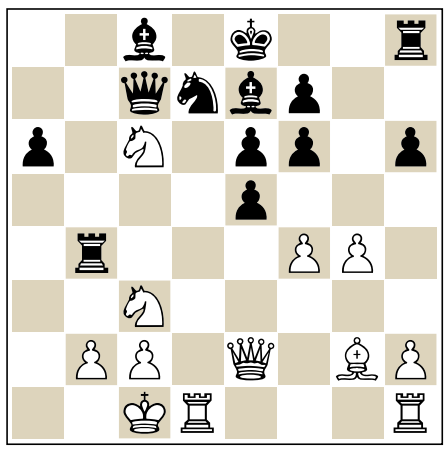


15.♘c6!

I remembered that in certain games ♘c6 was played, and in all of them White won. This inspired additional confidence.

15...♗b7

I was expecting 15...h6 16.♗xf6 gxf6, and now:

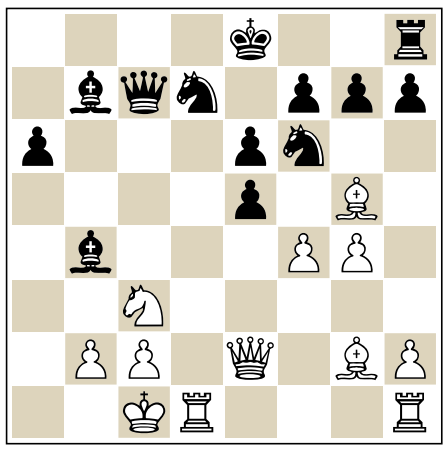


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

A) 17.♘xb4 ♗xb4 18.♘e4 exf4 19.♖xd7 ♗xd7 20.♘xf6+ ♔d8 21.♖d1 ♗d6 22.♕e4, with attack;

B) 17.fxe5!?, and White retains strong pressure. The game Spraggett-Czakon, San Sebastian 2007, concluded as follows: 15...♖b6 16.♘xe7 ♗b7 17.♗xb7 ♖xb7 18.fxe5 ♘xe5 19.♖de1 ♘ed7 20.♕xa6 1-0.

16.♘xb4 ♗xb4



17.fxe5

17.♗xf6 ♘xf6 18.♗xb7 ♕xb7 19.♕xe5 0-0 20.g5 ♗xc3 21.♕xc3 ♘d5 22.♕d4 also looked strong, but the game continuation seemed stronger to me.

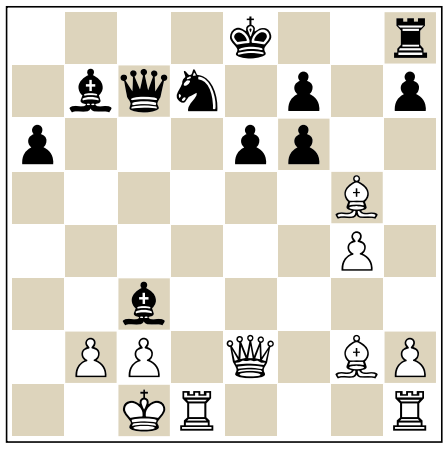
17...♗xc3

After 17...♘xe5 18.♗xf6 (or 18.♗xb7 ♗xc3 19.bxc3 ♕xc3 20.♕xa6, winning) 18...gxf6 19.♗xb7 ♕xb7 20.♘e4 ♗e7 21.♖hg1 White is winning.

18.exf6 gxf6

I calculated 18...♕a5 19.bxc3 ♕xg5+ 20.♕d2 ♕xd2+ 21.♖xd2 ♗xg2 22.fxg7 ♖g8 23.♖xg2 ♖xg7 and judged the position to be technically won.

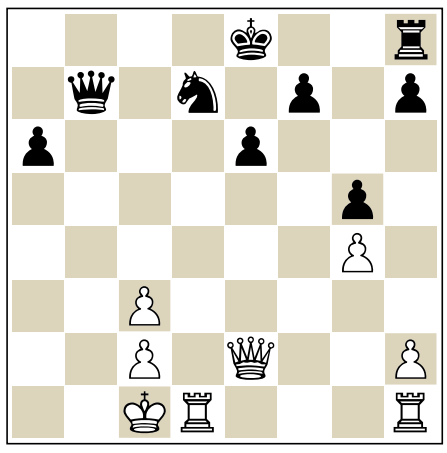
If 18...♗xf6 19.♗xf6 ♘xf6 20.g5 ♗xg2 21.♕xg2 ♘d5 22.♖xd5 exd5 23.♖e1+ ♔f8 24.♕xd5, and wins.



19.bxc3

I thought that exchanges would lead to the simplest conversion of my material advantage. 19.♗h6 ♗e5 20.♗xb7 ♕xb7 21.c3 came into consideration, but the bishop is very strong on e5.

19...fxg5 20.♗xb7 ♕xb7

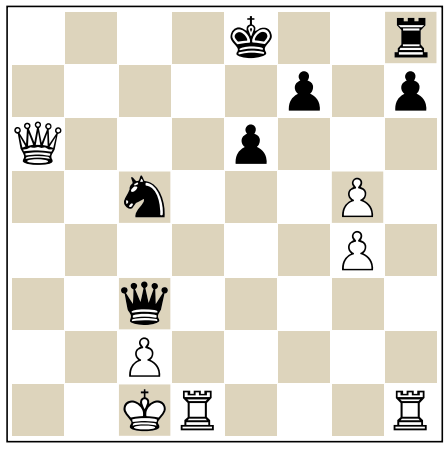


21.h4! Bringing the second rook into play.

21...♕c7

21...gxh4 was more tenacious, although after 22.♖xh4, White's position is easily won.

22.hxg5 ♕xc3 23.♕xa6 ♘c5



24.♕a8+

The prosaic 24.♕c8+ ♔e7 25.♖d7+ was simpler, but in such a position all roads lead to victory.

24...♔e7 25.♕a7+ ♔f8 26.♖hf1

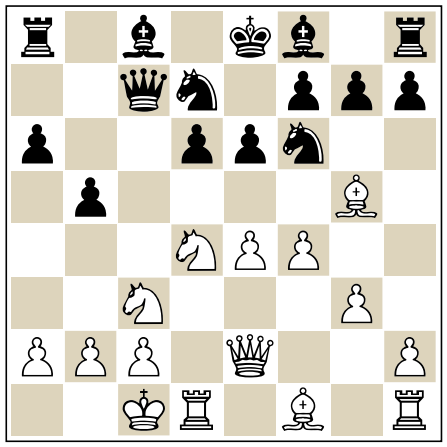
Black resigned.

It was not hard to predict which opening variation would be played in Smeets-Van Wely. Like Ivanchuk, Smeets did something clever: he was the first to deviate from the earlier games, preventing Van Wely from showing what reinforcements he had come up with.

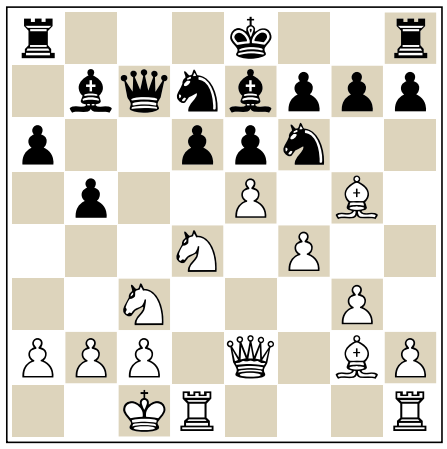
NEW IN CHESS

Vasily Ivanchuk: 'I noticed that Nakamura played this variation with black against Smeets, and that the next day he employed it with white against Van Wely and won confidently. I decided to make use of his experience, and it turned out very well.'

Smeets played **10.g3** instead of 10.a3.



He wants to fianchetto his bishop and then aim for e4-e5. But it goes without saying that he must be prepared to sacrifice a piece with 11.♘d5 after 10...b4. After 11...exd5 White has no fewer than three moves to launch an attack: 12.exd5+, 12.♗g2 and 12.♘f5. There is little doubt that Smeets had prepared for this thoroughly with his second Sipke Ernst.
Black, incidentally, is forced to play 10...b4; otherwise White gets too much play without any sacrifices. Van Wely learnt this to his cost. After **10...♗e7 11.♗g2 ♗b7** White's **12.e5**



was already so strong that Black was teetering on the edge of the abyss. His king is stuck in the middle, and White will be able to mobilize all his pieces for the attack. Things went downhill from here very quickly: **12...dxe5 13.fxe5 ♘d5 14.♗xe7 ♘xc3 15.bxc3 ♗xg2 16.♕xg2 ♔xe7 17.♘c6+**, and the black position collapsed soon afterwards.

After the game, Ernst said that they had had the position on the analysis board till after White's 17th move. Again I was surprised: there are so many difficult sidelines, so why bother with positions in which all that is left is the execution? This game completed Van Wely's debacle. But he didn't seem too worried about it. A week after the tournament I met him in Porz during a Bundesliga match, where he seemed quite cheerful and told me that during his preparation for the tournament he had exclusively concentrated on the Najdorf Variation.

So it's just as well that he played his other games without any preparation, otherwise his entire tournament could have turned into a disaster.

In the final round, Dominguez went for the immediate 6...♘bd7, as in Keres-Sajtar.
Recent examples have shown that 7.♕e2 leads to the variations discussed above because Black is always forced to play e7-e6. But Shirov followed in Keres's footsteps with **7.♗c4.** After **7...♕b6 8.♗b3 e6 9.♕d2 ♗e7 10.0-0-0 ♘c5 11.f3 ♕c7 12.♔b1 0-0 13.g4 b5** a sharp battle with chances for both players ensued. Black has lost a tempo with his queen, but White has been unable to exploit this, since he is not in the position to launch a strong advance in the centre.

Summing up, we can say that Ivanchuk scored the best result with the line, winning both as White and as Black. The Najdorf with 6.♗g5 is still completely in the making, and it is fascinating to see how the play continues to develop. I have a feeling that I will have to return to it in the future.

JAN TIMMAN

JUST CHECKING

NAME: **Michael Adams**

ELO-RATING: **2704**

DATE OF BIRTH: **November 17, 1971**

PLACE OF BIRTH: **Truro, England**

PLACE OF RESIDENCE: **Taunton, England**

NEW IN CHESS

What is your favourite colour?
Red or white are good, rosé is not my favourite.

Who is your favourite author?
Robert B. Parker, Carl Hiaasen, Tom Sharpe and Ian Fleming.

What was the most interesting book you ever read?
I recently finished 'The Black Swan' by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, which I enjoyed.

What is your all-time favourite movie?
'Pulp Fiction' probably, I also like James Bond and Terminator movies.

What is your favourite TV series?
'Boston Legal' and 'Californication'.

Do you have a favourite actor?
Morgan Freeman. I just saw 'Frost/Nixon' with Frank Langella – he was excellent.

And a favourite actress?
Tara MacGowran!

What music do you like to listen to?
Warren Zevon, Squeeze, Guns N' Roses, Madonna.

Do you have a favourite painter or artist?
My wife has some of Ralph Steadman's works, his mind works in a very cool way.

What was the best game you ever played?
I like my game with Ivanchuk in Terrassa 1991, probably because I was clever enough not to let the computer see it.

Is there a chess book that had a profound influence on you?
I have strong recollections of reading 'Petrosian's Best Games 1946-63' by Peter Clarke when I was quite young. 'Profound influence' might be going a bit far though.

Who is your favourite chess player of all time?
Tal was a lot of fun and a class act on and off the board. I was very happy that I got to play him a couple of times.

What do you see as your best result ever?
Avoiding a real job.

What are chess players particularly good at (except for chess)?
Daydreaming – and maybe poker.

Do you have any superstitions concerning chess?
After a defeat, I use a different pen for the next game (if I can find one).

Who or what would you like to be if you weren't yourself?
Dolphins look pretty happy.

Which three people would you like to invite for dinner?
Martin Johnson, Amelia Earhart, Saul Hudson.

Is there something you'd love to learn?
A foreign language.

What would you save from your house if it were on fire?
My insurance policy.

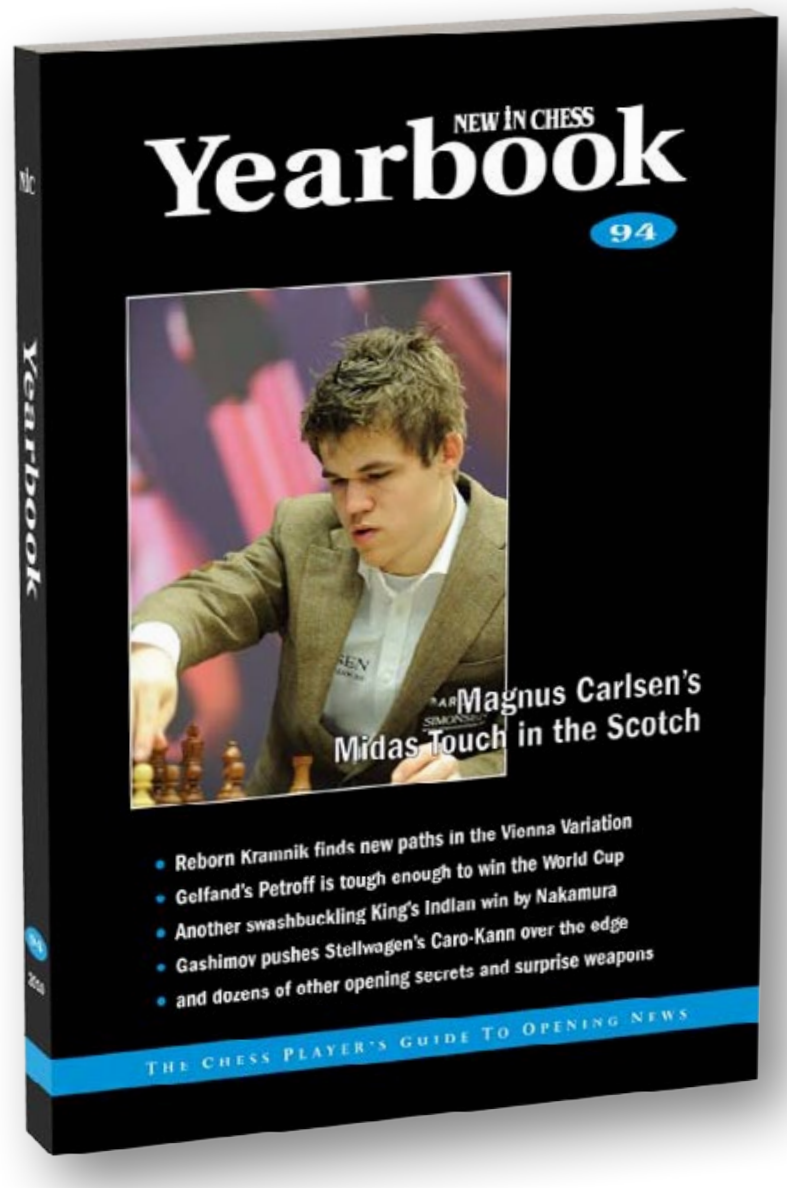
What is the stupidest rule in chess?
Unfortunately too many to choose from – but a rule that allows someone to be defaulted for not being present at the board despite arriving early for the game is a masterpiece of moronic-ness.

What will be the nationality of the 2050 chess world champion?
I'm not sure – will they have finished the current cycle by then?

What is the best thing that was ever said about chess?
'Chess doesn't drive people mad, it keeps mad people sane' – Bill Hartston.

‘Fantastic value for money’ – **British Federation Corr. Chess**

NEW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Yearbook

94

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- What did Tigran Petrosian do if his opponent threatened to play the Dutch Defence?
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- Does Roman Dzindzichashvili squash White’s hopes in the Max Lange Gambit?
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- What Kasparov discovery in the Scotch brought Magnus Carlsen his first victory over Peter Leko?
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